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BRIEF



A visually-impaired student reads a text in braille during an interactive session between Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education and Lady Irwin College on World Braille Day, in New Delhi, Thursday.

Endorse

New Delhi: Over 3,200 eminent citizens from the Christian community, including TMC MP Derek O'Brien, have endorsed a statement dissociating from a lunch hosted for the community representatives by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 25 while flagging growing attacks and vilification from "members of the ruling regime" and the situation in Manipur.

Special drive

Mumbai: The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking has launched a special drive to curb ticketless travelling on its buses since the start of the New Year and caught nearly 950 passengers for unauthorized rides in a single day earlier this week. In a release issued on Thursday, BEST said under the drive, it caught 945 ticketless passengers on January 2 and collected a fine of Rs 58,457 from them.

Bandh

Bhawanipatna: The 12-hour bandh called by the BJP in Odisha's Kalahandi district in support of farmers hit normal life on Thursday, with markets and educational institutions remaining shut and vehicles off the roads, police said. Emergency services were exempt from the bandh, which was mostly peaceful, police said.

CBI arrest

New Delhi: The CBI on Thursday arrested two deputy chief controllers of explosives posted at Nagpur's Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organisation (PESO) for allegedly receiving Rs 10 lakh bribe from the owner of a Rajasthan-based company, officials said. The agency arrested Vivek Kumar and Ashok Kumar Dalela, Deputy Chief Controller of Explosive besides Director of Rajasthan-based Super Shivshakti Chemical Pvt. Ltd Devi Singh Kachhawaha and an alleged tout Priyadarshan Dinkar Deshpandey in connection with the case, they said.

Weather
High 28 Low 15

MARKET
NIFTY 71847.57
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BULLION
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CASE INVOLVING 8 INDIANS IN QATAR

'Legal team has 60 days to appeal'

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI): The eight jailed former Indian Navy personnel in Qatar have been given 60 days' time to appeal against the varying prison terms handed by a Qatari court last week that came following commutation of their death sentences, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. The Court of Appeal in Qatar on December 28 commuted the death sentence handed down to the Indians in October and sentenced them to prison for varying durations, weeks after their family members filed an appeal against the earlier order by another court. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the legal team of the Indian nationals received a copy of the court order that he described as a "confidential document". "On December 28, the Court of Appeal had given a judgement. Thereafter, we issued a press release giving details (and) telling

that the death penalty has been reduced. Now, we have the judgement order, which is a confidential document," he said. Jaiswal was responding to a question. "The court has given 60 days for the appeal to be made before the Court of Cassation, which is the highest court in Qatar. And it is for the legal team now to decide the next course of action. So, that is where we are," he added. The spokesperson further added: "What we can confirm to you is that the death penalty has now been converted into varying prison sentences for the eight Indian nationals." "We are in touch with the family members. We are also in touch with the legal team," Jaiswal said. It is learnt that the prison terms handed to the former Indian Navy personnel ranged from three years to 25 years. The Navy veterans were on October 26 given death sentences by Qatar's Court

of First Instance. The Indian nationals, who worked with private company Al Dahra, were arrested in August last year reportedly in an alleged case of espionage. Neither the Qatari authorities nor New Delhi made the charges against the Indian nationals public. The charges were filed against the eight Indian navy veterans on March 25 and they were tried under Qatari law. All of the former Navy officers had "unblemished stints" of upto 20 years in the Indian Navy and had held important positions including that of instructors in the force. In May Al-Dhara Global closed its operations in Doha and all those working there (primarily Indians) have since returned home. It is learnt that India is also looking at the possibility of invoking provisions of a bilateral pact on the transfer of sentenced persons.

India level series with seven-wicket win in two-day finish

Cape Town, Jan 04 (PTI): India beat South Africa by seven wickets to share the honours in the two-match series as the second Test ended inside five sessions here on Thursday. Visiting India thus completed a remarkable comeback after losing the first Test in Centurion by an innings and 32 runs. Fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah finished with excellent figures of 6/61 as India bowled South Africa out for 176 to set themselves a target of

79, after Aiden Markram had struck a magnificent, counterattacking 106 off 103 balls before lunch. The hosts completed the chase in the second session with skipper Rohit Sharma and Shreyas Iyer remaining not out on 17 and 4 respectively. This is the shortest Test match ever in terms of overs bowled, bettering the previous best that involved Australia and South Africa at the MCG way back in 1932.

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RECORD HOLDER

Cong gets into poll mode

Discusses LS poll strategy, manifesto, seat sharing

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI): Getting into poll mode, the Congress on Thursday initiated discussions on the party's strategy, manifesto and seat-sharing for the Lok Sabha elections while also finalising the route map for the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, a hybrid version of the earlier foot march. As the top leadership of the party got into a huddle at the Congress



headquarters to give final shape to their plans, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge told party leaders to unite by sinking their differences and not talk out of turn on sensitive issues outside the party line that often causes embarrassment. Sources said the party decided to concentrate with full strength on around half the Lok Sabha

seats where the Congress stands a chance of victory. They added that the Congress is looking to contest more than half the total seats. The sources said the party has asked the state units to begin the process of candidate selection and provide the first list. It is likely to announce screening committees for all states by this week and candidate selection would start immediately, the sources add, noting that the party would declare the first list of candidates "very soon".

Buying blood at hospitals becomes cheaper

Govt says only processing charges to be levied

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI): Hospitals and blood banks can now only charge processing fees for blood as the apex drug regulator has decided to do away with all other fees to check the practice of overcharging. In a communication to all states and UT drugs controllers cum licensing authorities, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) stated that the decision was taken in view of the opinion that "blood is not for sale". Referring to the 62nd meeting of the Drugs Consultative Committee held on September 26, 2023, the DCGI in the letter on December 26 said, "It was recommended with respect of agenda No. 18 of

ATR point 3, for overcharging of blood, it was opined that blood is not for sale, it is only for supply and only processing cost may be charged by the blood centre." The revised guidelines stipulate that only processing fees can be charged for blood or blood components which ranges between Rs 250 to 1,550 for blood or blood components. "The DCGI has asked states and UT drug controllers to direct all blood centres under their jurisdiction to adhere to the revised guidelines. According to official sources, per unit of blood in case of no blood donation is priced between Rs 3,000 to Rs 8,000 by private hospitals.

Verdict on making Gyanvapi survey public today

Varanasi (UP), Jan 04 (PTI): A Varanasi court would decide Friday whether to open the sealed ASI survey report on the Gyanvapi mosque complex and provide copies to the Hindu and Muslim sides. The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) had on Wednesday urged the court not to make its report public for at least four more weeks, according to the lawyer for the Hindu side, Madan Mohan Yadav. Varanasi district court judge A K Vishvesh then adjourned the matter till Thursday. However, on Thursday, he could not take up the matter as he was engaged at an event, his office said and added that the matter was then posted for Friday.

Modi goes snorkelling in Lakshadweep



PM Modi tries snorkelling during his visit in Lakshadweep.

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi went snorkelling to explore the undersea life during his recent visit to Lakshadweep islands. Modi posted pictures of his undersea exploration on X and shared his "exhilarating experience" of the sojourn in the islands located in the Arabian Sea. "For those who wish to embrace the adventurer in them, Lakshadweep has to be on your list. During my stay, I also tried snorkelling - what an exhilarating experience it was," he wrote. Modi also shared pictures of his early morning walks on the pristine

beaches of Lashkadweep and some moments of leisure, sitting on a chair by the beach. "In addition to the scenic beauty, Lakshadweep's tranquility is also mesmerising. It gave me an opportunity to reflect on how to work even harder for the welfare of 140 crore Indians," he said. Modi was in Lakshadweep on January 2 and 3 to inaugurate the Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fiber Connection and lay foundation stone for the renovation of primary healthcare facility and five model Anganwadi centres. He also dedicated several projects to the nation. "Recently, I had the oppor-

tunity to be among the people of Lakshadweep. I am still in awe of the stunning beauty of its islands and the incredible warmth of its people. I had the opportunity to interact with people in Agatti, Bangaram and Kavaratti. I thank the people of the islands for their hospitality. Here are some glimpses, including aerial glimpses from Lakshadweep," Modi said on X. He said the government's focus in Lakshadweep was to uplift lives through enhanced development. "In addition to creating futuristic infrastructure, it is also about creating opportunities for better healthcare, faster internet and drinking water; while protecting as well celebrating the vibrant local culture. The projects that were inaugurated reflect this spirit," Modi said. "Had excellent interactions with the beneficiaries of various government schemes. It's inspiring to see firsthand how these initiatives are fostering better health, self-reliance, women empowerment, improved agricultural practices and more.

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Energy conservation workshop held at Krishi Vigyan Kendra

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: A day-long workshop on energy, water conservation and farmer awareness was organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Government of India on Wednesday at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Anjora, Durg. About 70 farmers from different villages participated in the programme.

They were given information about crop change, water conservation and energy efficient pumps. As the chief guest in the workshop, Dr. Sanjay Shakya, Director of Extension Education, Dau Shri Vasudev Chandrakar Kamdhenu Vishwavidyalaya Durg informed about energy and water conservation and made the farmers aware about doing agriculture with new technologies.



nologies.

Dr Vikas Khune, Krishi Vigyan Kendra Anjora, as a special guest, while explaining the importance of energy and water conservation, called upon the farmers for crop rotation and to take other crops instead of paddy in summer to save money. Dr Umesh Patel, soil expert, provided

information to the farmers about various schemes including water economy in agriculture, crop insurance in case of crop failure in adverse circumstances, irrigation through drip and sprinkler etc.

Superintendent Engineer of CREDA, Bhanu Pratap and District

Incharge Ranjit Kumar Yadav informed the gathering about the various schemes and guidelines currently run by the Government of India and the State Government regarding energy conservation.

Various methods/measures regarding energy conservation were also explained.

Detailed information about solar energy powered equipment and agricultural machinery was provided to the farmers. Information about departmental schemes was also shared. Other subject experts present in the programme were Dinesh Sinha (Solexy Eco Power), Yatesh Verma (KY Energy) and Raunak Luthra (Energy Technology).

They gave information about energy saving in energy efficient pumps. The farmers resolved to conserve water by using energy efficient equipment and adopting crop rotation. In the programme, Tarika Damle (Sub-Engineer), Dihwarin Uike (Accounts In-charge), Harish Srivastava (Sub-Engineer), Yamini Dewangan and other staff of CREDA were present.

COURTESY VISIT



Former cabinet minister of the state Prem Prakash Pandey paid courtesy visit to the Chief Minister of the state Vishnu Deo Sai and extended greetings for the New Year. During the meeting, Pandey had meaningful discussions on various issues.

Flyover false ceiling collapses within six months

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: The false ceiling installed on the Nehru Nagar Flyover collapsed in the wee hours of Thursday. Fortunately, there were no casualties as the commuters had stopped after sensing trouble. The false ceiling was constructed only six months ago as a part of the beautification project of Nehru Nagar Square.

According to DSP (Traffic) Satish Thakur, the sheets of false ceiling had slightly come down on the intervening night of Thursday. After a few hours, the sheet got pulled

by the roof of a truck. Later, a large portion of

nel of Traffic Police reached the spot and the construction company was informed. The fallen structure was removed from the road to ensure smooth traffic movement.

It needs to be mentioned here that the beautification work of Nehru Nagar Square was conducted last year in three different parts.

The false ceiling and vertical garden on the flyover were conducted under this project. A huge amount was spent on this beautification work. The sudden collapse of the structure has exposed its poor quality of construction.

the false ceiling collapsed early in the morning on Thursday. On information, person-

nel of Traffic Police reached the spot and the construction company was informed. The fallen structure was removed from the road to ensure smooth traffic movement.

Manish welcomes CBI probe into CGPSC scam



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: The cabinet decision of the state BJP government for a CBI probe into CGPSC scam is a welcome step, stated Manish Pandey, Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha's state executive member and Raipur in-charge.

This commendable initiative of the government is the victory of the struggle of thousands of

CGPSC candidates of the state. With this decision of the government, the said scam will be investigated impartially and the candidates will get justice, he added.

Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha had staged protest for the welfare of the candidates and a widespread movement was launched by BJYM across the state against the CGPSC scam, he reminded.

Office bearers of Nigam Karmachari Sangh meet MLA & Mayor

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: A delegation of Chhattisgarh SwashasiKarmachari Sangh, Durg Municipal Corporation branch met MLA (Durg urban) Gajendra Yadav and Durg Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal on Thursday. Presenting a bouquet, the newly elected delegate extended New Year greetings.

This delegation was led by President Sanjay Mishra and General Secretary Anil Singh. During the meeting, the delegation discussed issues in the interest of employees with the Mayor.

MLA Gajendra Yadav and Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwaltoo congratulated the officials of the employees union for the New Year



and wished them a bright future. Present on the occasion were DMC Public Works Department in-charge Abdul Ghani, Water House Department in-charge Sanjay Kohle, members of the Sangh.

Others present were Shashikant Yadav, Ishwar Verma, Raju Bakshi, Kiran Aggarwal, Chandan Manhare, Raju Chandrakar, Rekha Kurre, Thackeray, Chandralekha Kasar, Yogendra Verma etc.

Rajya Sabha MP provides e-tricycle to Divyang Major Singh

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: Rajya Sabha MP and National Vice President of Bharatiya Janata Party Dr Saroj Pandey on Thursday provided an e-tricycle to Divyang Major Singh, resident of Khursipar, from the MP fund.

Disabled Major Singh is a resident of Sector -11, Zone 02, Khursipar. Being Divyang he was dependent on the help extended by parents, siblings and crutches to perform his work.

But now with the new e-tricycle provided by Saroj, Major Singh will be able to



complete his work independently with the help of e-tricycle. Saroj said that Major Singh will no longer have to depend on anyone and this it was a pleasant feeling for her.

Annual Sports Day organised at DAV Ispat Public School

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: DAV Ispat Public School Sector 2 celebrated the Annual Sports Day with full zeal and enthusiasm in its premises on January 03, 2023. The day was graced by the presence of Tapas Dasgupta, Chairman LMC & CGM Incharge (Iron), Deputy Regional Officer Prashant Kumar, Assistant Regional Officer Dr BP Sahu, Ravi Bhaskaran (Principal DAV ACC Jamul), Shiv Prakash.

The day commenced with the formal opening ceremony by singing of the Rajgeet in unison with the school choir group fol-

lowed by the DAV Anthem. After the floral welcome of the esteemed guests the Sports Flag was hoisted which was followed by the March Past where students of the four houses i.e. the Virjanand, the Hansraj, the Dayanand and the Shradhdhanand house participated.

The House Captains led their team holding the House Flag in full honour and dignity. The Oath ceremony was conducted by the Sports Secretary (Boy / Girl) of the school where all the participants and the non participants took a pledge to abide by all the rules and regulations of the Sports laid down by the school.



Thereafter, the lighting of the torch happened where the torch bearers, the sports Champions of the school took a full run on the track and then handed over the lighted

torch to the guests which was then lit.

After this, the Guest of Honour of the day addressed the gathering urging the students to take away the good things

which Games and Sports teach us and to value those qualities for their lifetime. The Official Declaration of the Sports Day was done by the Deputy Regional Officer DAV Institutions CG Zone Prashant Kumar.

The entire assembly witnessed a spectacular series of sports events from Nursery to class XII. The sports champions of the school produced their best to grab the medals and register their names in the medal tally.

All the winners of the Sports Day were felicitated on the victory stand by the distinguished guests. A small token of gratitude and respect was presented

by Principal Priyanka Shukla to all our dignified guests and for making out their time from their busy schedule.

The Prize Distribution ceremony was followed by the Jumbled March by all the participants running slowly to the famous and captivating tune of the yesteryears Run For Freedom amidst beating of the drums.

The Sports Flag was lowered by the PE faculty followed by the putting out of the torch symbolising the official conclusion of the eventful day. The declaration of the sports meet close was made by the Assistant Regional Officer Dr BP Sahu.

66322 ASD voters identified in district

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: Special summary revision of electoral rolls with photos is underway from January 01, 2024. Chief Electoral Officer (Chhattisgarh) Reena Babasaheb Kangale reviewed the process through video conferencing. Collector and District Election Officer Pushpendra Kumar Meena, Additional Collector and Deputy District Election Officer Bajrang Kumar Dubey and all the EROs of the district were present.

As per the instructions given by the Chief Electoral Officer, the special summary revision of the electoral roll with qualifying date January 01, 2024 will be published on January 06, 2024. After the initial publication, the claim and objections will be received in all the polling stations from January 06, 2024 to January 22, 2024.

Special camps will be conducted on January 13, 2024

(Saturday) and January 14, 2024 (Sunday) also during the holidays to collect claims and objections in all the polling centres. Applications for addition, deletion and correction (Format 6, 7, 8) of names of voters in assembly constituency number 63 Durg Rural, 64 Durg City, 65 Bhilai Nagar and 66 Vaishali Nagar can be submitted online / offline in the Tehsil Election Branch located at Tehsil Office Durg.

For Vidhan Sabha 62 Patan and 67 Ahiwara respectively, the place of submission of application will be fixed as Sub Divisional Officer (R) Patan/Dhamdha. For any kind of problem regarding addition, deletion and amendment (Format 6, 7, 8) of name in the voter list for voters in the district, the concerned applicants will be able to use the helpline number 1950 of the Election Commission of India.

As per the instructions of the Commission, a dedicated ARO has been appointed for 100% registration of young



voters in the voter list, who will coordinate with the Professor Nodal Officer and Campus Ambassador appointed in the colleges and organize the camp for 100% registration. The officials were directed to coordinate with identified colleges of the district - VYT College Principal MA Siddiqui and prepare an action plan. During the Assembly Elections 2023, 66322 ASD (Absent / Shifted / Deleted - Dead) voters of the district have been identified.

Keeping in view the Lok Sabha elections, it has been directed to take the deletion action of the ASD voters as per the rules and procedure. Chief Electoral Officer gave instructions regarding the upcoming Lok Sabha general elections 2024. Regarding the progress of the revision work, the Electoral Registration Officers were directed to organize a weekly meeting of BLOs and BLO supervisors.

The report of Critical and Vulnerability Mapping is to be

sent to the Chief Electoral Officer, Raipur within 02 days of appointment of Sector Officer and Police Sector Officer and by January 20, 2024. From January 29, 2024, the work of FLC (first level checking) of EVM/VVPAT machines will be done as per the prescribed protocol.

If the names of voters appear in more than one place in the voter list, the list will be marked under PSE and DSE. Verification work is being done by BLO. If duplicates are found, the names of the said voters will be deleted from the voter list by filling Form 7 as per rules. Voters who have blurred / low quality photographs in the voter list can take the process of photo correction by filling Form 8 through the Voter Helpline App.

Instructions were given to activate the police checkposts for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024 and conduct search and seizure proceedings as per rules.

Richa Prakash Choudhary takes charge as Durg Collector

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 04: Newly posted Collector of Durg District, Richa Prakash Choudhary assumed charge of the office on Thursday evening.

Indian Administrative Service 2014 batch officer Richa Prakash Choudhary was earlier posted as Collector in Janjira-Champa district.

Outgoing Collector of Durg district, Pushpendra Kumar Meena (IAS) handed over the charge to Collector Richa Prakash Choudhary and congratulated her for her new responsibility.

On this occasion, all the Additional Collectors, Deputy Collectors and offi-



cers and employees of other departments posted

in the district office were present.

CM underlines role of State Planning Commission in achieving sustainable development goals

Says effective plans and their implementation will make Chhattisgarh a leading state

Raipur, Jan 04: Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said today that State Planning Commission was preparing effective plans for rapid and balanced development of Chhattisgarh with utilization of adequately available resources and skilled human resources in Chhattisgarh. Continuous review is being done regarding the targets set for development in the districts through SDG Progress, he said Sai who is also the Chairman of State Planning Commission, at a meeting held to review the work of the State Planning Commission and the release of SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) District Progress Report 2022. Dhamtari, Balod and Raipur districts were leading in the report. Chhattisgarh is a state rich in forest resources and minerals, he said while emphasizing value addition to forest produce.



Efforts have to be made for the development of areas like Surguja and Bastar, he said, adding that value addition to forest produce creates better income opportunities for its collectors. He also stressed the need to do more work in areas like fisheries so that the income of farmers can be increased by adding such activities along with agriculture. **Choudhary for regular review of the progress of all departments to achieve targets** Planning, Economic and Statistics and Finance Minister OP Choudhary said that to achieve sustainable development goals, work like research and study work and encouragement of innovation had been done by the State Planning Commission. The

districts performing well in SDGs to promote competition in the districts. Vice Chairman of the Commission, Ajay Singh told that the 17 goals have been set by the United Nations for sustainable development. The state is committed to achieving them, he said, adding that through this, the progress data of the districts can be seen through SDG dashboard and corrective action can be taken after being aware of the comparative progress. The member Secretary State Planning Commission Anoop Kumar Shrivastava made a detailed presentation on the main achievements of the Commission, its future work plan and progress report. In the meeting the Member of State Planning Commission Dr K Subramaniam and Secretary to CM P Dayanand and Secretary Planning & Statistics department Anand, Joint Director State Planning Commission Dr Netu Gaurdia and Bal Paritosh Das from UNICEF and officers of the State Planning Commission were present.

Commissioner cum Director DPR Mayank Shrivastava assumes office

Also as CEO Ch'garh Samvad

Raipur, Jan 04: The newly appointed Commissioner cum Director Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) Mayank Shrivastava assumed office here on Thursday. He took charge as Commissioner DPR and CEO Chhattisgarh Samvad at DPR's office in Naya Raipur Atal Nagar. The outgoing Commissioner DPR Deepanshu Kabra extended greetings to Mayank Shrivastava for the new responsibility. On this occasion officers of DPR and Chhattisgarh Samvad were also present. After assuming office, Mayank Shrivastava also



held introductory meeting with the departmental officers and took information about the department's working as well.

Mayank Shrivastava pays courtesy visit to CM



Raipur: The Commissioner cum Director Directorate of PR and CEO Samvad Mayank Shrivastava paid courtesy call on CM Vishnu Deo Sai at his official residence here on Thursday. On this occasion CM Sai extended greetings to him for the new responsibility.

Rahul's Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra to pass through 7 districts of Ch'garh

From January 14

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 04: After 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is now going to start 'Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra' from January 14.

The 'Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra' will continue till 20th March. Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra will take place from east to west i.e. from Manipur to Mumbai. 'Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra' to be flagged off by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge in Imphal, will pass through

15 states and end in Mumbai. The Nyaya Yatra will pass through 7 districts of Chhattisgarh. It will cover a total 536 kilometers in Chhattisgarh. The main objective of Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra is to provide political, economic and social justice

to the common people. This Yatra to be lasting for 67 days will pass through 15 states and 110 districts. As many as 100 Lok Sabha and 337 Assembly constituencies will be covered through Nyaya Yatra. The Yatra will cover total distance of over 6700 km.

CHRC issues notice to Medical College

For running paramedical course without recognition

Raipur, Jan 04: Chhattisgarh Human Rights Commission (CHRC) has issued notice to the Dean of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College, Raipur for running paramedical course without recognition. Paramedical course in Audiology was started in 2003. Even after 20 years, service recruitment rules have not

been framed. The paramedical course audio metric technician post was being run without recognition. Due to absence of service recruitment rules more than 50 candidates still remained jobless and their age limit has crossed. Their future has been ruined due to the great negligence of the college management. On the complaint of audiometry technician Om Prakash Nirmalkar the Commission has issued notice to the College dean seeking its reply within 3 weeks.

Diaphragmatic breathing must be done in case of shortness of breath: Experts



Workshop on Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Basic Life Support

Raipur, Jan 04: A two-day workshop on Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Basic Life Support has been organized by Government Physiotherapy College, Raipur from 4 to 5 January 2024. This workshop was inaugurated on Thursday, January 4 by chief guest Director Medical Education Dr Vishnu Dutt, Dean Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College Dr Trupti Nagaria. Special guests were Dr RK Panda, Head of the Department of Respiratory Medicine (Ambedkar Hospital), Dr KK Sahu, Head of Department CTVS (Ambedkar Hospital) and Dr Rohit Rajput Principal

Government Physiotherapy College. Subject expert Dr. Sumanta Ghosh was invited from Delhi to provide special training in the workshop. Dr Sumanta Ghosh informed the participants about various techniques of physiotherapy given to the patients admitted in ICU. These cutting-edge techniques included manual hyperinflation, suction, chest percussion, etc. With these techniques, an attempt is made to expel the mucus accumulated in the lungs through the respiratory tract so that breathing becomes easier and the flow of oxygen increases. In case of shortness of breath, diaphragmatic breathing should be done, under which the process of breathing becomes efficient by inhaling through the nose, inhaling into the stomach and slowly exhaling through the mouth.

Both hands should be raised while inhaling through the nose and lowered while exhaling through the mouth. In this way the coordination of breathing with exercise increases the benefits. Neuromuscular electrical stimulation is used to maintain the strength of the body's muscles. Dr. Pratibha Jain Shah, Head of the Department of Anesthesia, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College, told that with the help of basic life support, a person's life can be saved in time in case of cardiac arrest. On the second day of this workshop, training will be given about other methods of physiotherapy. The organizing committee of the workshop includes all the teachers of Physiotherapy College including Principal Dr Rohit Rajput, Dr Rahul Jain, Dr. Chanan Goyal, Dr. Bindu Abraham and Dr. Manoj Deshmukh. On the first day of this workshop, about 130 participants received training which included students of Government Physiotherapy College and other physiotherapists of the state.

Those who looted country for 65 years talk of 'Nyaya Yatra': Mathur



Raipur, Jan 04: Taking a jibe at Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyaya Yatra, which is going to start from January 5, Chhattisgarh BJP state in-charge Om Mathur said, 'Rahul Gandhi's Yatra will not make any difference. To whom has the Congress Party done justice?', asked Mathur. This family has looted the country for 65 years and now they are talking about Nyaya Yatra for the country, said Mathur while talking to the media at Raipur Airport after his arrival here on Thursday evening.

Mathur said that Rahul Gandhi should do justice to himself first. Mathur reached Raipur in connection with the meeting to be held with ministers, state officials and MLAs on Friday. The BJP government has come to fulfill its promises, Mathur said, adding that this is a government of public welfare. This is the government that will take Chhattisgarh forward, he said, adding that decisions will be taken after continuous discussion on every topic. Earlier Deputy Chief Minister and State Public

Works Department Minister Arun Sao, Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Vijay Sharma, Minister OP Choudhary, Minister Tankram Verma, MLA Motilal Sahu, Rajiv Agrawal, State Media co-in-charge Anurag Agrawal, Kedar Gupta, Srichand Sundarani, Amit Sahu, former MLA Labhchand Bafna, Kishore Mahanand Anjay Shukla and a large number of BJP workers and state office bearers welcomed BJP state in-charge Mathur on his arrival at Raipur Airport.

New Collector Gaurav Kumar Singh takes charge



Raipur, Jan 04: The newly appointed Collector of the district, Gaurav Kumar

Singh assumed the charge of Collector today. Outgoing Collector Dr. Sarveshwar Bhure congratulated him for his new responsibility and wished him a bright future. Singh got the introduction of senior officers of the district and took information about the works. Singh is an All India Services officer of 2013 batch. Singh is the 21st Collector of Raipur district after the creation of Chhattisgarh state.

Sardar Patel Memorial Inter-School Badminton C'ship

NH Goel, DPS and Aarambh walk away with top honours



Raipur, Dec 04: First inter-school Sardar Vallabhai Patel memorial inter-school Badminton tournament organised by Shri Gujrati English Medium School, Devendra Nagar spelled tremendous success with over 100 players from different top schools of the city ensuring their presence in the tournament. The final matches and closing cere-

SPORTS ROUND-UP

mony was organised on January 04, Thursday in presence of Mrs Kavita Dixit, Former International Badminton Player and Coach as chief guest. The other special guests present were Ashok Bhai Patel, Vice President of GSS, Tulsi Bhai Patel and Ashok Patel secretary duo of

other faculty members. Chief Guest Mrs Kavita Dixit in her speech asked the students to focus on academics along with sports. She stressed on the fact that studies enhance concentration which is important for sports. She thanked the school management for offering a platform to the players and was hopeful that in the coming year this tournament will be organised with more grandeur. The guests lauded the untiring efforts of School Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma whose untiring efforts led to the success of this tournament in its inaugural year. The efforts of sports faculty Ashok Sahu and Varsha Futan were laudable for the smooth conduct of the tournament, informs Sports Officer Shrinivas Rao.

GSS, Jayant Bhai Taunk Treasurer, Anis Memon Principal of Shri Gujrati Hindi Medium Higher Secondary School, Administrator V K Mishra, Registrar Ashok Jachek and other invited guests apart from School Principal Dr Shailesh Sharma, Vice Principal S V Chandra Shekhar, Academic Coordinator Bhaskar Sharma and

Match Results

U-19 Girls: Ishika Poddar of Aarambh School winner and Harshifatt Kaur of Rajkumar College Runners Up. Vanshi Patel of Shri Gujrati English Medium HS School bagging third position. **U-19 Boys:** Atharv Sharma of Aarambh School winner and Sarthak Pujari of Bhavan's Runners Up. **U-14 Girls:** Aalya Talreja of Delhi Public School winner and Sia Rajput of Delhi Public School Runners Up. **U-14 Boys:** Vian Bhatnagar of NH Goel World School winner and Krishav Bhatnagar of NH Goel World School Runners Up.

Verma hails 7 new Khelo India Centres in Ch'garh



Minister Tankram Verma held review meeting with officials after assuming office as Sports Minister here on Thursday.

Raipur, Jan 04: Newly-appointed Minister for Sports & Youth Welfare Tankram Verma on Thursday extended gratitude towards Union Minister for Sports Anurag Thakur over sanctioning of 7 New Centres of Khelo India in Chhattisgarh. Director Sports Shweta

Shrivastava informed that Archery Khelo India Centre at Kondagaon, Football Centre at Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Kabbadi at Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi District, Football at Shakti, Kabbadi at Kabirdham, Badminton at Koriya District and Kabbadi at Manendragarh-

Bharatpur-Chirmiri Centre has been approved by GoI which would ensure better sports training facilities for players here. She further informed that 24 Khelo India Centres too have been approved earlier which is being successfully implemented by Directorate Sports. Newly-posted Sports Secretary Himshikhar Gupta too has expressed happiness over the new Khelo India Centres in Chhattisgarh. Earlier, the Sports Minister Tankram Verma assumed office and held a review meeting with the officials. He collected information about the various activities and added that better opportunities would be provided to the talented sportspersons. He also directed the officials to start registration of Sports Club at Rural Level.

'Ch'garh Institute of Technology' to be started on the lines of IIT: Sharma

New trades will start in ITI to provide employment to youth in industries

Raipur, Jan 04: Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma, in the review meeting of the Department of Technical Education and Employment at Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan here, instructed to take all necessary steps to start Chhattisgarh Institute of Technology on the lines of IIT in all 11 Lok Sabha constituencies of Chhattisgarh as per the guarantee of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He gave instructions to start the proceedings. Deputy Chief Minister Sharma told Vyapam officials in the meeting that the examinations to be conducted by Vyapam in the near future should be conducted before the Lok Sabha elections. He gave strict instructions to the officials that no examination papers should be leaked. Complete transparency should be maintained in the recruitment



examination. He directed the officers to immediately send a request letter in this regard to the Army Headquarters to increase the quota of recruitment of Agniveer in order to provide maximum employment to the youth of the state. He said that keeping in mind the needs of industries, new trades should be started in ITI, so that the youth can get employment easily.

Deputy Chief Minister, Sharma said that arrangements should be made to send SMS to eligible candidates for recruitment to vacant posts from the employment office. Similarly, the data of unemployed candidates should be maintained systematically in employment offices. He said that the names of the candidates who get employment should be removed

from the list. Similarly, instructions were given to the higher officials to get the service recruitment rules of Engineering College and Polytechnic approved soon by the General Administration Department. He also asked to prepare a proposal soon for setting up a training course and a unit for making dona-pattal from banana leaves and making bags and clothes from banana stem fiber. In the meeting, Secretary of Technical Education Department, Mr. Topeshwar Verma and Director in-charge of Technical Education Department, Dr. S.K. Singhai gave detailed information about the departmental work. Vice Chancellor of CSVTU Bhillai, Professor Dr. Mukesh Kumar Verma and many senior officials were present.

Schemes to be implemented rapidly: Netam



Raipur, Jan 04: Agriculture Development and Farmers Welfare and Biotechnology Minister, Ramvihar Netam reviewed the progress of departmental work by holding a meeting of senior officials in the meeting room of the Mandi Board located at Atal Nagar, Nava Raipur. He said that the Agriculture Department is an important department related to the farmers and common citizens of the state. For the convenience and betterment of farmers, better implementation of schemes should be done on priority. He asked for quality and better implementation of central and state sponsored schemes as a priority.

In the review meeting, Minister Netam directed the officials to take special initiatives to provide adequate quantity of chemical fertilizers to the farmers. He said that a fertilizer lab should also be established in Surguja to provide quality fertilizers to the farmers. Minister Netam, along with having information about the lands available for all the institutions under the Agriculture Department, directed to take immediate action

against the illegal encroachers. He instructed the officers to prepare an action plan for developing nurseries in all the development blocks of the state.

Minister also reviewed the progress of KCC loan. He said that even now credit cards have not been made for all the farmers in villages, especially in tribal areas. By publicizing the scheme, work should be done on making credit cards for 100% farmers as a priority, so that all the farmers can get the benefits of the scheme. He also laid special emphasis on the training of farmers. Minister Netam said that in coordination with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, he also directed to provide training to maximum number of farmers regarding improved agriculture of different crops. Minister also discussed about the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme, Prime Minister Irrigation Scheme, Food and Nutrition Security Scheme, Agriculture or Mechanization Scheme, Rain Fed Development Scheme, Soil Health Management Scheme, Millet Mission, Agricultural Irrigation Watershed Development Scheme including Horticulture, operated under the Agriculture Department.

Govt transfers 88 IAS officers, including 19 district collectors

Raipur, Jan 04: The newly elected BJP government in Chhattisgarh has effected a major bureaucratic reshuffle, transferring 88 Indian Administrative Service officers and one officer of the Indian Police Service.

Collector of 19 districts are among those who have been shifted, as per an order issued by the General Administration Department on Wednesday midnight. Some officers considered close to the previous Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress government are also among those who have been transferred. As per the order, the collectors of Raipur, Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur (MCB), Kanker, Korba, Rajnandgaon, Bemetara, Kondagaon, Durg, Surajpur, Narayanpur, Dantewada, Bijapur, Surguja, Janjgir-Champa, Balod, Dhamtari, Sarangarh-Bilgaigarh, Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai and Gariaband have been changed. P Dayanand, the 2006 batch IAS officer currently serving as secretary to the chief minister, has been relieved of the additional charge of medical education secretary. He has been given additional charge of the secretary of energy, mineral resources and public relations departments, chairman of the Chhattisgarh State Power

Company, as well as secretary of commerce and industry (rail line projects) and aviation departments. Dayanand was appointed as secretary to the CM on December 19, 2023, after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in the state. Mayank Shrivastav, the 2006 batch IPS officer, has been posted as commissioner-cum-director of the public relations department. As per the order, 1992 batch IAS officer Subrat Sahoo, has been posted as the additional chief secretary (ACS) of Dharmik Nyas (religious trust) and Dharmsva department. Prior to the new posting, he was ACS of the panchayat and rural development department along with additional charge of electronics and information technology, commerce and industry (rail line projects), PWD and chairman of the Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board. Sahoo has also been given additional charge of director general of the Thakur Pyarelal State Panchayat and Rural Development Institute, replacing Niharika Barik.

IAS officer Barik (1997 batch) has been appointed as principal secretary of the panchayat and rural development department with additional charge of development commissioner and prin-

cipal secretary of electronics and IT. Raipur Collector Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure has been posted as Chhattisgarh State Election Commission secretary. Gaurav Kumar Singh, the 2013 batch IAS officer, has been posted as Raipur collector. He was serving as joint secretary of the panchayat and rural development department with additional charge of forest and medical education departments. Pushpendra Meena, who was the collector of Durg, home district of former CM Bhupesh Baghel, has been shifted as secretary of the Public Service Commission. Taran Prakash Sinha and Sanjeev Jha, who were joint secretaries in the Mantralaya, have been shifted as joint secretary of sports and youth welfare department and director of Samgra Shiksha, respectively. Sinha previously served as the collector of Raigarh and Jha as the collector of Bilaspur. They were removed from the posts in October last year on the Election Commission's direction ahead of the state assembly polls. Bijapur Collector Rajendra Kumar Katara has been now shifted as director of the State Council and Educational Research and Training (SCERT) with additional charge as mission director of the State Literacy Mission.

Dr Mishra leads campaign to end witchcraft stigma

Asked people to join the campaign against superstition and social evils

Raipur, Jan 04: In a courageous effort to combat deeply ingrained superstitions and social injustices, Dr. Dinesh Mishra has been spearheading a 28-year-long campaign aimed at eradicating the harmful concept of witchcraft (Tonahi) in India. This superstitious belief has led to the unjust stigmatization of women, resulting in their public humiliation, physical torture, and social ostracization.

Dr. Mishra's campaign seeks to shed light on the unfounded accusations that have plagued innocent women, causing them to endure lifelong suffering. These false allegations often lead to severe physical and emotional trauma, with women facing not only physical injuries but also exclusion from society. In many cases, the pressure exerted by influential groups within villages prevents these incidents from being reported beyond the community, allowing the so-called "Baigas" to wield unchecked power.

These self-proclaimed witch hunters extort money by falsely accusing women of practicing sorcery and causing misfortunes in the village. They subject the ac-



cused to tests that are impossible to pass, leaving the victims trapped in a cycle of torment and despair. Dr. Mishra and his team have tirelessly worked to dispel such superstitions, conducting lectures, organizing scientific discussions on miraculous events, and engaging in seminars and meetings to expose the truth behind these baseless beliefs.

Dr. Mishra emphasized that the eradication of superstitions and social evils requires collective effort. He urged people from all walks of life to join the cause and contribute their time and insights to this important work. By working together, society can break free from the grip of harmful superstitions and ensure a brighter future for all. In the new year, he hopes that the momentum for change will continue to grow as more individuals and organizations unite against these deeply rooted issues.

SECR promotes passenger-focused devp at ZRUCC meeting

Meeting highlights achievements and cooperation

Bilaspur/Raipur, Jan 04: The 18th Zonal Railway Users Consultative Committee (ZRUCC) meeting, held on Thursday at the South East Central Railway Headquarters in Bilaspur, showcased a harmonious and collaborative atmosphere as railway officials and committee members gathered under the chairmanship of General Manager Alok Kumar. With 12 committee members in attendance and department heads from South East Central Railway participating, the meeting marked a significant step in enhancing passenger facilities and services.

Deputy General Manager and Secretary of South East Central Railway Regional Railway Users Consultative Committee, Samir Kant Mathur, kicked off the meeting by emphasizing the importance of the committee's suggestions and cooperation in achieving the zone's goals. General Manager Alok Kumar welcomed the esteemed



members and outlined South East Central Railway's efforts in developing passenger facilities and services. He proudly shared achievements, such as the introduction of over 2800 additional coaches during the festive season, benefiting over one lakh seventy thousand passengers with confirmed berths. Additionally, he highlighted the inaugural run of Central India's first Vande Bharat train between Bilaspur and Nagpur.

Alok Kumar encouraged the Regional Railway User Consultative Committee members to promote the 'UTS on Mobile' app, a Railways initiative, to make unreserved travel ticketing more accessible to the public. He stressed that South East Central Railway is dedicated to ensuring safe train operations and continuous improvement in passenger facilities, thanking

all members for their positive cooperation.

Following Alok Kumar's address, Samir Kant Mathur presented the significance of South East Central Railway through a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation, shedding light on passenger facilities and achievements.

The meeting delved into various crucial issues related to passenger facilities, development projects, and more. Honorable committee members provided valuable suggestions, including train stoppages and the expansion and enhancement of Road Over Bridge/Road Under Bridge facilities at important level crossing gates.

The ZRUCC meeting served as a testament to the commitment of South East Central Railway and its partners in continually improving passenger experiences and facilities.

'Corporation will take strict action against illegal advertising hoardings'

Advertise only through corporation authorized advertising hoarding agency

Korba, Jan 04: Under Municipal Corporation Korba area, strict action will be taken by the Corporation against illegally erecting advertisement hoardings by installing bamboo poles under the Korba area. Commissioner Pratishta Mangai has appealed to all the concerned to remove the advertising hoardings including other hoardings illegally installed by them. Various promotional materials should be removed within two days, otherwise action will be taken against them as per rules and action will be taken by registering an FIR in the police station along with imposition of fine.

It is noteworthy that in connection with the installation of advertisement hoardings on the government land under the corporation area by the Municipal Corporation Korba, after completing the formal tender etc., M/s Jain Advertisement Tickers T.P., who presented the highest rate in the tender, Nagar Korba is provided by Corporation's T.P.



Nagar, Kosabari, Pt. Ravi Shankar Shukla Nagar, Darri, Sarvamangala Nagar and Bankimongra area have been granted 5-year authority.

But it is being seen that some people are unauthorizedly erecting bamboo poles in public places under the corporation area, tent houses on the roadside, on electric poles, in public places, advertising boards, hoardings, flex, wall painting, banners in an unsafe manner. Advertisements are being spread illegally through posters etc., which is a clear violation of the provisions of Chhattisgarh Municipal Corporation Act 1956 (Advertising and Regulation) Bye-laws 2012 and illegal promotion of advertisements and hoardings. The act of illegal demonstration is a crime under Section 248 of the Act and is punishable under Section 434.

In this direction, the corporation will take concrete action and strict action will be taken against ille-

gal advertisers and promoters as per rules. Commissioner Pratishta Mangai has appealed to all the concerned including common citizens, tent businessmen, institutions, establishments, various event organisers, that the advertising materials like bamboo sticks hoardings, wall paintings, banner posters etc. installed by them for publicity should be removed within two days.

Remove it, otherwise if found doing this type of act, action will be taken against the illegal advertisers by registering an FIR in the police station along with fine as per the provisions mentioned in the Act. He has appealed that the Municipal Corporation should ensure legal display of advertisements through the corporation's authorized advertising agency Jain Advertisers, TP Nagar 9425224001 under Korba area and avoid inconvenience due to the action taken by the corporation.

Collector Namrata Gandhi assumes office

Dhamtari, Jan 04: The newly appointed Collector Dhamtari Namrata Gandhi (IAS-2013 batch) assumed office as the 19th District Collector of Dhamtari here on Thursday. Prior to this she was posted as Director Ayush and Addl. Charge of Pension.

Collector takes firm stance on fair paddy procurement

Korea, Jan 04: Paddy procurement at support prices is flourishing in the district, with the district administration overseeing the process and actively addressing any issues. Additionally, stringent measures are being taken to combat illegal paddy transportation and storage.

Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh visited the Jampara paddy purchase center and personally interacted with the farmers. He encouraged them to speak openly about any concerns, including unauthorized demands for money, access to drinking water, and timely token issuance. The farmers expressed their satisfaction, reporting that no illicit monetary demands were being made at the center.

Recognizing the potential for anti-social elements to cause disruptions during evening hours at paddy procurement centers, Langeh promptly arranged for police security to ensure the safety of the centers and farmers. The District Cooperative

Marketing Association revealed that there are 22,274 registered farmers covering an area of 30,009.089 hectares in the district. This year's target is to procure 113,666 metric tons of paddy. So far, 45,910 metric tons of paddy have been sold by 9,110 farmers, with 20,026 metric tons already lifted. Approximately 44 percent of the paddy has been successfully procured, thanks to the operation of 22 paddy procurement centers.

Collector Langeh issued stringent directives to the Cooperative Department officers in the deadline meeting, emphasizing the need for prompt action in response to complaints of gunny bag black marketing, illegal paddy storage, and transportation. Any confirmed irregularities or concrete complaints will result in decisive action. Nodal officers have also been tasked with regularly inspecting paddy procurement centers to ensure a seamless experience for farmers.

Yadav MLAs honoured by Sarv Yadav Samaj



Mungeli, Jan 04: In a heartwarming display of unity and recognition, representatives of the Sarv Yadav Samaj from across Chhattisgarh congregated in Raipur for a felicitation ceremony honouring the newly elected Yadav MLAs of the state. The event, organized by State President Ramesh Yadu, brought together a diverse gathering of Yadav community members.

Under the leadership of Youth Councillor and State Convener Rajshankar Yadav, the Sarva Yadav Samaj Chhattisgarh State held this grand celebration at Raipur's Vrindavan Hall. The event drew enthusiastic participation from workers and officials

hailing from Tehsil Mungeli, Patharia, Jarhagaon, Sargaon, Setganga, as well as various district-level representatives from Mungeli.

The highlight of the ceremony was the felicitation of the newly elected MLAs, including Dwarkadhish Yadav from Khallari, Ramkumar Yadav from Chandrapur, and Gajendra Yadav from Durg City. Former MP Rajnandgaon, Madhusudan Yadav, and Durg District Panchayat President Pushpa Yadav were also honoured. They were presented with silver crowns and mementos as tokens of appreciation.

Amid the celebration, the Sarva Yadav Samaj

Chhattisgarh state voiced their aspirations, advocating for the inclusion of Gajendra Yadav in the cabinet and endorsing former MP Madhusudan Yadav for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Rajnandgaon. The community emphasized that failing to accommodate these requests would result in a resounding demonstration of unity and determination within the state's Yadav community. The event witnessed the presence of key figures, including State Organization Minister Ramkumar Yadav, Parsadi Yadav, District President Naresh Ram Yadav, Executive President Dhaniram Yadav, General Secretary Ritesh Yadav, Secretary Sadheram Yadav, Treasurer Sukhmandan Yadav, District Advisor Ropchand Yadav, Manharan Yadav, Vice President Binay Yadav, and Organization Minister Makralal Yadav, among others.

National Glory: Bal Bharati's sports stars shine bright



Sipat, Jan 04: In a commendable achievement, the students of Bal Bharati Public School, NTPC Sipat, have etched their names in the annals of national sports glory.

Vicky Yadav, a 12th grade student, clinched the second position in the National Volleyball Championship (2023-24) held in Kawardha, in the Under-19 category and brought honour to the school.

In addition, another 10th grader, Tanisha Sahu, showcased stellar performance in the State-level Taekwondo Competition organized by the School



Games Federation of India. Her exceptional skills and determination led her to claim the gold medal, elevating the prestige of the school. Tanisha's selection for the 67th National Inter-School Taekwondo Competition (2023-24) in the Under-17 category further adds to the pride of the school. The glorious competition took place in the regal city of Betul, Madhya Pradesh.

Expressing delight, the school's principal, Mr. Shalabh Nigam, extended his congratulations to the students for their remarkable achievements

OBITUARY

Jagdish Rao Phutane

Raipur: Jagdish Rao Phutane, R/o Satyanarayan Chowk, Tikrapara, breathed his last here on Thursday. He was 72. The final rites were performed at Marwari crematorium. He was husband of Sarojini Phutane and father of Manish Phutane (working in Central Chronicle) and grand-father of Pratham Rao Phutane.

Maha cabinet nod for OPS to state employees

Who joined service after Nov 2005

Minister's Office (CMO) said.

Talking to PTI, Vishwas Katkar, general secretary of the Maharashtra state employees' confederation, said, "The cabinet's decision will benefit some 26,000 state government employees who were selected before November 2005 but received joining letters later. This decision will benefit only these 26,000 state employees."

There are as many as 9.5 lakh state employees who joined the service before November 2005 and they already enjoy the benefits of the OPS. Under the OPS, a government employee gets a monthly pension equivalent to 50 per cent his/her last drawn salary. There was no need for contribution by em-

ployees. The OPS was discontinued in the state in 2005.

Under the New Pension Scheme (NPS), a state government employee contributes 10 per cent of his/her basic salary plus dearness allowance with the state making a matching contribution. The money is then invested in one of the several pension funds approved by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and the returns are market-linked.

The state cabinet also cleared a proposal to charge Rs 250 as toll amount for cars for using the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), the country's longest sea bridge that connects Sewri

in Mumbai to Nhava Sheva in neighbouring Raigad district. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the MTHL on January 12. The 21.8-kilometre long bridge will bring down the journey from the current two hours to around 15-20 minutes.

The cabinet gave its nod to the proposal to issue Rs 5 per litre subsidy to the milk producers in the state. The decision was announced in the winter session of the state legislature held last month.

In another proposal okayed by the cabinet, the clerks-typists working in the Mantralaya will be given a monthly allowance of Rs 5,000 over and above their current remuneration, the CMO said.

FARMERS PROTEST



Farmers during their protest outside the NTPC office on a cold winter day, in Noida, Thursday.

All 3 branches of government removed Article 370: Dhankhar

Kathua (JK), Jan 04 (PTI):



Jagdeep Dhankhar

The executive led by the prime minister, the legislature - Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha - and the judiciary. All three unanimously removed Article 370 from our Constitution," Dhankhar said. With this, Syama Prasad Mookerjee's dream has been completely fulfilled, he said. Mookerjee had left an indelible mark on this land, he said.

"The land with grave imprints of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the land facing danger, has seen that danger being removed in this era. No one thought that Article 370 would be stamped out. This article, called temporary in the Constitution, became an eyesore for us," Dhankhar said.

Union Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh attended the function. Twenty-five startups, including 11 from Jammu and Kashmir, took part in the expo, titled "Emerging Startup Trends in North India".

'Govt not serious to address issues in JU after acting VC's removal'

Kolkata, Jan 04 (PTI):

A teachers' association of Jadavpur University on Thursday accused the West Bengal higher education department of not acting promptly to address the uncertainty in the state-run varsity since officiating Vice Chancellor Buddhadeb Sau was removed by Governor C V Ananda Bose last month.

Bose, who has been in conflict with the higher education department over appointment of officiating vice-chancellors of state-run universities, sacked Sau on the eve of the university's convocation on

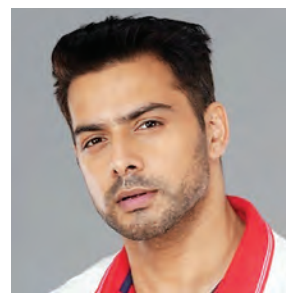
December 24. Sau himself was appointed by the governor to the chagrin of the TMC government.

The convocation was, however, held on the scheduled day following the intervention of the state government. The governor had termed the action of the state in support of the sacked VC as "unauthorised and illegal".

Jadavpur University Teachers' Association (JUTA) told PTI that the higher education department showed promptness in issuing notice after midnight to facilitate holding the convocation.

Experience a saga that spans two lifetimes

Mumbai, Jan 04:



Rajpal

Legendary tales such as Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnu, and Romeo Juliet have made an indelible mark on the canvas of love, transcending the boundaries of death. Resonating with these cult love stories, COL-ORS is preparing to unveil 'Qayaamat Se Qayaamat Tak', an eternal saga chronicling two souls pursuing an everlasting love that surpasses life itself. Starring Karamm Rajpal and Trupti Mishra in the lead roles of Rajneesh and Poornima, the upcoming romance thriller is an extraordinary Real love story of reincarnation in which the barriers of age, time, and societal norms are put to the ultimate test.

S Rajpal expresses, "Reincarnation stories have always fascinated me since childhood. As an actor, it's a fantastic opportunity to be part of 'Qayaamat Se Qayaamat Tak'. For me, this show isn't merely about playing a role; it's about instilling the belief in viewers that love never fades (as I'm a staunch believer in love)."

Discussing the role of Poornima, Trupti Mishra asserts, "Reincarnation is perceived as a mystical event, and my goal, through the portrayal of Poornima, is to make viewers believe in it. I am very excited about this intriguing tale and can't wait for the audience to experience a saga that spans two lifetimes."

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the general public that the "Installation of additional 12 MT Induction Furnace to produce 36,000 TPA MS Billets, activity covered under 3 (a) Metallurgical Industries. Existing production capacity Sponge Iron: 2 X 100 TPD - 60,000 TPA, WHRB - 2 X 3 MW, Induction Furnace 12MT - 36,000 TPA MS Billets and Biomass Based Power Plant - 5 MW by M/s Sunil Sponge Pvt. Ltd., located at Plot No. 96, 97, Siltara Phase II Industrial Area, Village Siltara, Tehsil & District-Raipur, Chhattisgarh - Grant of Environmental Clearance under violation category of Notification 14.03.2017-regarding, vide EC Identification No. EC23A008CG111548 (File. No. J-11011/541/2021-IA,II(IND-I) on dtd. 13/12/2023 and copy of the Environmental Clearance is available with the office & may also be seen on their of MoEFCC https://parivesh.nic.in website.

ALL FOR LIVELIHOOD



A roadside vendor sells guinea fowls, on the outskirts of Jagdalpur, in Bastar district, Thursday.

Kota couple die of suffocation due to burning firewood in room

Kota (Rajasthan), Jan 04 (PTI): A couple in their 40s was found dead here on Thursday morning with burnt-out firewood beneath a pot of non-veg curry nearby in their room, police said.

The incident took place under the Kishorepura police station area in a marriage garden where the man worked as a guard. The couple was most likely suffocated to death due to smoke in the un-ventilated room, police said. The couple was identified as Laxman Koli (45) and his wife Chanda (40). They had been living in Kota for the last 20 years and the man was working as a guard in the marriage garden in the Banjara Colony. The two bodies were found lying side-by-side on the floor and burnt-out firewood with a pot of non-veg curry nearby them in the room when its door was broken open on Thursday morning, Kishorepura police station SHO Harlal Meena said.

Name Change

It is informed to the general public that I-NAVEEN BAGRECHA S/O LATE Inder Chandra Bagrecha Resident of Phase1 Plot 29, Magneto Signature GE Road Mangneto Mall Purena Raipur CG-492001 have changed my old name NAVIN BAGRECHA S/O LATE Inder Chandra Bagrecha as in future I should be recognised by my new name that is NAVEEN BAGRECHA S/O LATE Inder Chandra Bagrecha in all government and other documents.

NAVEEN BAGRECHA PHASE1 PLOT 29, MAGNETO SIGNATURE GE ROAD MANGNETO MALL PURENA RAIPUR CG-492001

'Ram is our family God and I'm his devotee'



H A Iqbal Hussain

He added that since his childhood he had been worshipping Saraswati, Lakshmi, Ganesha and Rama. "I have decided to celebrate 'Ramotsava' with devotion with all

the political parties in a grand but secular way," Hussain said. On the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, he said, "some people do something for their polit-

ical gain but Congress never uses God and religion to divide people." "Congress has an ideology, commitment and discipline, which I follow," Hussain said.

Regional Office, First Floor, Zonal Market, Sector-10 Bhalai (C.G.) - 490006, Mobile No. 90514 05724 E-mail: PE.Durg@bankofbaroda.com

PREMISES REQUIRED FOR EXISTING BRANCH

Bank of Baroda invites offer from the owners/ Power of attorney holders of premises for housing of its office/ Branch at :

S.No	Name of The Branch	Present Address of The Branch	Premises Required At	Required Carpet Area For Premises In Sq.Ft.
01	KUMHARI	Main Road, NH 6, Old Cloth Market, Kumhari, Dist: Durg (C.G.) Pin: 492042	AROUND PRESENT BRANCH PREMISES AND IN GOOD BUSINESS LOCALITY AS WELL AS CONVENIENT TO CUSTOMERS	1100 - 1500
02	PANDARIYA	Kawardha Road Pandariya, Dist.-Kabirdham (C.G.) Pin : 491559	AROUND PRESENT BRANCH PREMISES AND IN GOOD BUSINESS LOCALITY AS WELL AS CONVENIENT TO CUSTOMERS	1100 - 1500

Premises available with all facilities including adequate power. The premises shall be ready for occupation or likely to be ready for occupation within a period of 3 months. The intending offerers shall submit their offers in two separate sealed cover superscribed Technical bid and Price bid to "Assistant General Manager, Bank of Baroda, Regional Office Durg, 1st Floor Zonal Market, Sector 10, Bhalai, District Durg Pin: 490006" on or before 29-01-2024. (For details please login to the tender section of our website- www.bankofbaroda.in/zonal-regional-offices-tenders.htm). The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any offer without assigning reasons thereof. Date: 05.01.2024, Place: Durg (C.G.) Asst. General Manager, Bank of Baroda, Regional Office, Durg

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.

Corporate Office: Unit No.802, Natraj Rustomjee, Western Express Highway and M.V.Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai-400069 Raipur Branch : 1A & 1B, 2nd Floor, Shyam Plaza, Pandari, Raipur-492004, Chhattisgarh. Authorised Officer : Ashwin Sharma, Mob.-: 7697112220

PROPERTY FOR SALE UNDER PROVISIONS OF SARFAESI ACT, 2002 THROUGH PRIVATE TREATY

Whereas the Authorised Officer, Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) has taken the Possession u/s 13(4) of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (The SARFAESI Act, 2002) of the property ("the Secured Asset") given below The Authorised Officer has received offer of Sale from some interested party against the above mentioned Secured Asset under the SARFAESI Act for recovery of the Secured Debt. Now, the Authorised Officer is hereby giving the Notice to Sale of the above said property through Private Treaty in terms of rule 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. The Details of the Account are as follows:

Loan Code No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrowers	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Reserve Price (RP)	Total Outstanding Loan Amount as on date (29-11-2023)	Description of the Secured Asset
(Loan Code No. 0080000826/ Raipur Branch)	Maanmati Rajwade (Borrower), Hetram Rajwade (Co-Borrower)	12-10-2022 & ₹ 3,09,558/-	₹ 1,35,000/-	₹ 1,00,870/- (Rs. One Lakh Eight Hundred Seventy Only)	All that Piece and Parcel of the property bearing, Plot No.335 Harshicon City Mouza Orethi P.H. No.16 RNM Simga Dist. Balodabazar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh - 493101. Boundaries: East: Road, West: Plot No. 325, North: Plot No. 334, South: Plot No. 336.

The Authorised officer will hold auction for sale of the Secured Asset on "As is where is Basis", "As is what is basis" and "Whatever there is basis". AHFL is not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the said property. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to accept or reject the offer without assigning any reason whatsoever and sale will be subject to confirmation by Secured Creditor. On the acceptance of offer of proposed buyer, he/she is required to deposit 25% of accepted price inclusive adjustment of Earnest Money Balance immediately and the balance amount shall be paid by the purchaser within 15 (fifteen) days from date of acceptance of Offer by the Secured Creditor. The proposed buyer is to note that in case of failure of payment of balance amount by him/her within the time specified, the amount already deposited shall stand forfeited and property will be resold accordingly. This is 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002 is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the above described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" and to the amount due to Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd., in full before the date of sale, auction is liable to be stopped. If the Borrower(s), Co-borrower(s) has any buyer who is ready to purchase the mortgage property/secured asset at price above the given reserve price of then Borrower(s), Co-borrower(s) must intimate to AHFL on or before 20-01-2024, AHFL shall give preference to him. If Borrower(s), co-borrower(s) fails to intimate on or before 20-01-2024 the AHFL will proceed sale of property at above given reserve price. The Date of Auction is fixed for 20-01-2024.

Place : Raipur Date : 05-01-2024 (Authorised Officer) For Aadhar Housing Finance Limited

Drivers protest across India against Hit and Run Law

Drivers Rally at Hadha Chowk, Kasdol, demanding amendments to legislation

Katgi, Jan 04:

Demonstrations by drivers against the hit and run law continue to resonate across the country, with drivers from the entire region gathering at Hadha Chowk in the Kasdol block of Balodabazar district, Chhattisgarh, on Tuesday. The protesters strongly condemned the legislation and called for its immediate withdrawal, while urging unity among drivers to bring about changes in the law and restore the previous state of law and order.

At Hadha Chowk, drivers took a stand by halting oncoming trucks, cars, tractors, and other four-wheelers. They passionately advised fellow drivers to refrain from operating their vehicles and emphasized the need to unite against the new provisions in the Hit and Run law. The protesters demanded revisions to the



law until the government addresses their concerns.

The police were present at the scene, attempting to persuade and disperse the demonstrators who had gathered in the middle of the road. Prominent figures from the drivers union, including President Baba Aditya, Sonu Khan, and Rohit Banjare, were present during the protest. The gathering also included Inder Kumar Yadav, Ashwini Sahu, Latif Khan, Mohan Verma, Monu Khan, Shiv Kumar Jaiswal, Bhola Ram Yadav, Bed Ram Verma, Narendra Verma, Kush Kumar Sahu, along with hundreds of others.

The ongoing protests stem from dissatisfaction with the new provisions in the Hit and Run law. Under this legislation, drivers involved in hit and run incidents on the road face up to 10 years of imprisonment and substantial fines. The law deems leaving the scene of a vehicle collision without aiding injured individuals or informing the authorities as a hit and run. In the past, such cases resulted in a provision of 2 years' imprisonment with the possibility of bail. The recent amendment has sparked nationwide protests, with drivers from various sectors opposing the stringent penalties.

It's essential to note that the law applies not only to truck drivers but also to private vehicle operators, making it a contentious issue for a broad spectrum of drivers. Given the widespread concerns surrounding this legislation, drivers have united to voice their dissatisfaction and call for reconsideration of its provisions.

Farmers should not face any kind of inconvenience in the paddy procurement centre and ever procurement centre in-charge should take special care of this, issuing the above instructions, District Collector Narendra Kumar Dugga has instructed all the nodal officers to continuously submit the inspection reports of the paddy procurement centre.

The Collector also took prompt action on the application of a farmer of village Semra who reached the Collectorate complaining of irregularities. On the instructions of the Collector, District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Dr. Ashutosh Chaturvedi conducted a surprise inspection of the paddy procurement centre located in village Nagpur.

After talking to the farmers who had come

Collector orders investigation on farmer's complaint

Manendragarh, Jan 06:

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After talking to the farmers who had come



to the paddy procurement centre here, he examined the paddy being purchased and also examined the paddy that was rejected for being non-standard and took information on all subjects from paddy procurement centre in-charge Mr. Rakesh Sahu. When the reply was not found satisfactory, he spoke directly to the

Assistant Registrar Cooperative Society MCB on telephone and directed to issue a show cause notice to the in-charge of the paddy procurement centre.

He said that Collector MCB has clear instructions that as per the standard quality, paddy will be purchased from all the farmers in the stipulated time and

strict action will be taken immediately against anyone who is negligent or commits any irregularity during this period. It may be noted that late in the evening, farmer Ramnath of Gram Panchayat Semra had lodged a complaint about irregularities in the paddy procurement centre Nagpur.

Dean Dr. KK Sahare conduct inspection

Takes information about facilities of patients

Bilaspur, Jan 04: Dean of Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS), Dr. K.K. Sahare is inspecting the hospital regularly and providing guidance to the concerned officers and employees to resolve small and big problems occurring in the hospital. Keeping in view the convenience of the patients, the gynecology department has been shifted to the dentistry department on the first floor, while the dentistry department has been started on the third floor. The Dean inspected both the above departments and gave instructions to the concerned doctors to provide



all possible facilities to the patients. Instructions were given to the attending doctors to shift the patients admitted in the

emergency ward to the concerned department within 24 hours. During the inspection in the ward, Dr. Sahare discussed with

the admitted patients and their family members and took information about the treatment and facilities being provided, as the

work of installing a new lift is going on near the emergency department. In order to ensure that the patients do not face any problem in commuting, the work was started by installing barricades and asked to open the new lift for the people as soon as possible. There are 38 wards operated in the hospital, in which patients are admitted and provided treatment facilities in a total of 750 beds. SIMS management has started the work of pest control treatment in each ward one by one and this work is done under the supervision of SIMS management experts. Dean Dr. KK Sahare instructed all the concerned officers and employees to work continuously in the interest of the patients.

Three accused in girl trafficking case nabbed

Had sold the girl to two persons in Rohtak Haryana

Kawardha, Jan 04: The accused woman Somati sold a daughter of her relative to two persons, who in turn forcefully threatened the girl to marry them and outraged her modesty by marrying her. Both the accused by nabbed by Kawardha police and a case under section 363, 366, 370, 376(2)(N) and 376 (D), 506, 34 of IPC was filed and both were sent to jail. The complainant filed a report in Kukudur Thana and based upon which a team was prepared under leadership of TI Kukudur SK Sarthi and 'humrah' staff and in-



vestigation was started. The team nabbed accused Somati alias Somkali R/o Gram Sodha Thana Mawai, district Mandla (MP) and on serious interrogation she accepted that she had taken daughter of her relative to Delhi and then sold her to Sunny Surya and Jaibhagwan S/o Rohtak Haryana. In this case the two other absconding accused from Rohtak Haryana were also nabbed and on interrogation accepted to have pur-

chased the victimised girl from Somta alias Somkali W/o Amarlal Dhurve for Rs 2 lakh and took her forcefully to Arya Samaj in Rohtak and marry her and outraged her modesty. On this both the accused Sunny Surya S/o Jaibhagwan Surya (25) and Jaibhagwan S/o Umed Surya (52) were taken into arrest from Baniyani Thana, Kalanaur District Rohtak Haryana and sent to judicial remand.

MLA Ishwar Sahu dedicates newly constructed PAC

In Gram Biranpur

Saja, Jan 04:

It was in the chief presence of MLA Saja Vidhan Sabha Ishwar Sahu and in the presence of SP Bemetara Bhawana Gupta, the newly constructed building of Police Assistance Centre (PAC) was inaugurated at Gram Biranpur under Thana Saja of Bemetara district here on Wednesday.

MLA Ishwar Sahu said that the dedication of newly constructed PAC in Gram Biranpur would definitely provide convenience to the residents and would help in checking illicit sale of liquor and on other anti-social activities like gambling, 'satta', sale



of drugs and others. Citing about the earlier incident he urged all to live with peace and brotherhood and said that the new PAC has been dedicated in order to solve the problems being faced by common men.

SP Bemetara Bhawana Gupta said that the newly constructed PAC in Gram Biranpur has been dedicated in order to solve problems of general public and it would definitely help the people living in Gram Biranpur and near-

by villages and they can file their complaint or report here and they need not visit all the way to Saja thana now. In context of earlier incident, SP appealed the people not to come under influence of rumour by the anti-social elements and live in peace and mutual harmony and find out amicable solution to any problems being faced by any community or society. She also appealed people to help the jawans on duty and follow the traffic rules on daily

basis and asked all two-wheeler riders to wear helmet while riding.

In the above programme, Addl.SP Bemetara Pankaj Patel, SDOP Berla Tejram Patel, Manish Singh Rajput, reserved inspector Bemetara, Mukesh Yadav TI Saja; SI Rajkumar Sahu TI Parpodi, SI Rakesh Sahu TI Khambaria, SI Yashwant Janghel Checkpost in-charge Devkar, head constable Vijendra Singh Rajput, PAC Biranpur, Gram Patel, Devnarayan Sahu, Manohar Sahu, Bhuwan Sahu, Dy. sarpanch Rukumal Sahu, Gangaprasad Sahu, Leelaram Yadu, Sachiv Shiv Prasad Janghel, Hanuman Sahu and others were present.

Central Jt Secy observes VBSY

Manendragarh, Jan 04: Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra in the district is continuously moving forward in a positive direction and in order to reach maximum number of people, the district administration organized camps in Chanwaridand, Tilokhan, Bauridand of Manendragarh, Chidola of Ghaghra Janakpur, Karri and Khadgawan Katkona and Jarodha region. Central Joint Secretary Anupam Mishra participated in the event of Bauridand of Manendragarh development block today and he provided gas connections to the beneficiaries of Ujjwala Yojana as a symbol. Soil Health Cards were distributed to the



farmers by the Agriculture Department and he inspected the stalls of all the departments. The main objective of the camp organized in the program was to deliver the benefits of the schemes to the beneficiaries, especially the deprived and aspiring people, in a time bound manner. In the camp,

under 'My Story in My Words', Savita shared the benefits of Ujjwala Yojana and Jagaraniya Sahu shared the benefits of Matritva Vandana Yojana, while Laxman Singh shared the benefits of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Kailash Agaria shared the benefits of Kisan Credit Card in

front of everyone. According to the information received by the Health Department, help camps were organized at eight places in the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, in which 1061 people were treated for diseases like non-communicable diseases (BP, sugar etc.), sickle cell disease and TB.

Percentage of crime reduces by 4.21% in 2023

Dhamtari, Jan 04:

SP Dhamtari Prashant Thakur has strengthened the policing in the district and by separating the law & order cases and those of crimes, action has been taken on priority in solving the crime and providing justice to the people. He has also issued instructions to all the officers and employees to lodge complaints on time and take action within law and find amicable solution to the problems on hand.

The work of District Police for 2023 was reviewed and in this the SP Prashant Thakur directed his team to remain disciplined and carry out policing seriously and remaining vigilant and make new work plan to better it further and work with re-

newed energy for the year ahead.

SP Prashant Thakur while reviewing the works of 2023 in Dhamtari district informed that in a comparative case of 2022 and 2023, the district police took prompt action in all serious cases and this brought reduction in crime to 4.21% and sorted out many cases in record time as well.

In 2022 total of 3154 crimes were conducted and which in 2023 was 3021 and in this way there was reduction of 4.21% in 2023. In the crimes under IPC in 2022, total of 2096 crimes were conducted and which in 2023 was 1914 only and this brought reduction of 8.68%.

In cases of earlier pending cases of 281 out of total 3021 in 2023, 2062 crimes

As compared to 2022 in Dhamtari district

Took effective steps to check illicit sale of liquor and drugs in the district

were sorted out and its percentage was 78.80%.

There was fall in cases of murder, looting, theft, cheating, group clashes, injury, dowry, atrocities and others in 2023 compared to 2022.

In cases of property related crime out of total Rs 1.17 cr stolen property, 39.94 lakh was recovered and its percentage was 34.08%. There was only 1 dacoity case and in this 10 accused were nabbed and percent success was



achieved. In case of property related crimes, in the year 2022, as against 218, only 166 cases were registered in 2023; the cases of 'Nakabjani' in 2022 were 133 and in 2023 it was 98 only. The number of looting incidents was 10 in 2022 and 7 in 2023. In this way there was shortfall of 24.93% in crimes related to properties. In case of murders, in total 25 cases, 43

accused were nabbed. In crime against drugs and intoxication, as against 598 in 202, only 810 took place in 2023 and in this 822 persons were nabbed and 2132.61 lts of illicit liquor worth Rs 8.58 lakh was seized and in this way 26.17% more action was taken.

In case of action against those supply intoxicated materials, as against 21 cases in 2021, 27 cases were registered in 2023 and total 39 persons were nabbed and total 3.41 quintal of 'Ganja' worth Rs 52.38 lakh was seized along with 2472 capsules worth Rs 15806; sold amount worth Rs 690; 5.14 gms Heroine worth Rs 51,400 and 1.43 gms Heroine 'chitta' worth Rs 9000 was seized. Further in case of gambling,

'satta', a total of 176 cases were registered and 430 persons were nabbed and cash of Rs 5.59 lakh was seized. In Arms Act case, 40 cases were registered in 2022 and 65 in 2023 and 65 accused were nabbed and button knives, sharp-edged weapons and others were seized.

As compared to 2022, prohibitory action was 27% more in 2023. Under the Mission Mobile Search, this year 250 stolen mobile phones were recovered and this include 150 on 06/03/2023 worth Rs 19.53 lakh; another 100 on 08/12/23 worth Rs 15 lakhs, totalling 250 mobiles worth Rs 34.53 lakh.

In case of online fraud, out of total 146 cases in 2023, the amount put on hold was 18,74,925, informs SP.

Action against non-standard pesticides

By Agriculture Department

Korba, Jan 06: The Agriculture Department is continuously taking action on the storage and distribution of pesticides found non-standard in the district and in this connection, after the sample analysis of pesticide Profenophos 40 Cypermethrin 4 in M/s Kesari Seed Store, Katghora, it was found to be non-standard, the storage and distribution of the said pesticide has been banned with immediate effect.

While giving information, Licensing Officer (Pesticides) and Deputy Director Agriculture said that the sample of pesticide drug Profenophos 40 Cypermethrin 4 from M/s

Kesari Seed Store was sent by the Pesticide Inspector Katghora to the Deputy Director Agriculture, State Pesticide Quality Control Laboratory, Thelkadih, Rajnandgaon for analysis. And after analysis of the said pesticide sample, due to it being found non-standard, the Deputy Director Agriculture, using the powers given in Section 14 of the Pesticide Act 1968, banned non-standard pesticide drug Profenophos 40 Cypermethrin 4 batch number SH-0759 of the manufacturing company Sumil Chemical Industry Pvt. Ltd. in the district. There is a ban on storage, distribution and display with immediate effect.

Taiwan's presidential candidate Ko Wen-je seeks a middle ground with China

Hsinchu, Jan 04 (AP):

With Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary elections less than two weeks away, the island's alternative party candidate Ko Wen-je is promoting a policy of patience toward China, which has been upping its threat to annex the island by force.

In the middle of a day of campaigning in the city of Hsinchu, home to many of Taiwan's most prosperous technology firms, Ko took a half-hour lunch break to speak with The Associated Press in Mandarin Chinese and English, often expanding on his answers in his well-known erudite manner.

Ko, a surgeon and former mayor of the capital Taipei, likened the relationship between the sides to a tumour that should be left to itself while the sides engage in talks on a future relationship.

"Thirty years ago, when I was a surgeon, if we found a tumour, we would try to remove it. But at this



Taiwan's Taiwan People's Party (TPP) presidential candidate Ko Wen-je, right, waves to supporters during his campaign rally in Xiangshan District, southwest Hsinchu City, Taiwan, Thursday, Jan. 4.

moment, we just try to live with it," he said. China remains an issue that must be managed, without sparking a major confrontation between the sides, he said.

While Taiwan's elections are largely determined by issues of social equity, employment, education and welfare, relations with China are all ways an overarching issue in presidential elections.

Taiwan split from China amid civil war in 1949 and the two remain politically at odds, even while their cultural ties remain strong and their economic relations a driver for global markets in high-technology. China sends warplanes close to the island on daily basis. Ko is chairman of the Taiwan People's Party and has cooperated in the past with both the ruling

Democratic Progressive Party, which strongly backs Taiwan's state of de-facto independence, and the main opposition Nationalists, known as the Kuomintang or KMT, which holds that Taiwan and the mainland are part of a single Chinese nation while insisting on upholding the self-ruled island's democracy in face of Chinese pressure.

The TPP has been filling a space in between that has drawn strong support from younger voters unwilling to follow their parents' political allegiances and are less sensitive to the cultural divide between those with long-standing ties to the island and others whose families migrated there during the civil war.

While Ko does not stir crowds in the same manner as traditional Taiwanese politicians, his drive and non-conformist manner have made him a significant player with those looking for a political alternative.

LANDSLIDES



This aerial photo shows a national road is blocked by landslides caused by earthquakes in Suzu, Ishikawa prefecture, Japan Thursday, Jan. 4.

Pakistan Peoples Party nominates Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as its PM candidate

Lahore, Jan 04 (PTI):

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has nominated its chairman and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as its official prime ministerial candidate ahead of the general elections on February 8, a media report said on Thursday.

The PPP's Central Executive Committee (CEC) discussed in detail the party's campaign for the general election. The meeting also discussed the party election manifesto, which decided to give priority to youth and women empowerment, employment, health, and education. The News International reported.

Soon after the meeting late on Wednesday evening, a detailed post on PPP's official X handle with photos of the meeting informed that members of the CEC expressed



their confidence in the leadership of party president Asif Ali Zardari and chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

"President Asif Ali Zardari presented the name of chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as the candidate for the Prime Minister on behalf of Pakistan Peoples Party. The CEC has endorsed Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as the Prime Ministerial candidate of PPP," the party posted on X.

The 35-year-old son of slain former prime minister Benazir Bhutto is con-

testing from Lahore (NA-127) constituency, where he would compete with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Shaista Pervaiz Malik and a PTI-backed candidate.

PPP leaders including Secretary General Taj Haider, Syed Khurshid Shah, Rana Farooq Saeed Khan, Qamar Zaman Kaira, Samina Khalid Ghurki, Murad Ali Shah, Chaudhry Aslam Gill, and Ali Badr were present at the meeting.

The newspaper report further quoted Bilawal, as talking to the media after the meeting: "Gen Zia imposed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on us and Gen Faiz Hameed imposed the PTI. He said both the PML-N and PTI were representative of the ruling elite. Both were unable to address the issues confronted by the country."

Pakistan witnessed 17 per cent spike in terrorist violence last year

Islamabad, Jan 04 (PTI):

Pakistan witnessed a 17 per cent spike in terrorist violence in 2023, with a total of 306 militant attacks which killed 693 people, according to a new think tank report which said banned groups like the Pakistani Taliban, Islamic State Khorasan, and the Balochistan Liberation Army accounting for over 82 per cent of the terrorism-related deaths.

The security report for 2023 by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) released before the February 8 general elections raises questions over the security of electoral candidates and political leaders during the election campaign and polling, the Dawn newspaper reported on Thursday. The report said militants' intensifying attacks indicate that the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its affiliates will continue to resort to an intensified terrorism onslaught with a view to force

Pakistan to reinstate the process of dialogue.

The report emerged days after the interior ministry informed the Senate that the continuous influx of TTP members in significant numbers, with recruitment, training and placing of suicide bombers, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged districts is "a cause of concern". Military sources told the Dawn newspaper that Afghanistan has not been able to fulfil its commitments made in the Doha agreement as TTP continues to use Afghanistan as a base for terrorist activities inside Pakistan. The Pak-Afghan border, described as difficult and porous, poses a formidable challenge despite security measures. The PIPS report highlights Pakistan's inadequate response to the rising terrorism and militancy challenge, exacerbated by negotiation attempts with the TTP and the widening political focus due to ongoing crises.

UK statistics watchdog looking into' Rishi Sunak's asylum backlog claim

London, Jan 04 (PTI):

The UK's statistics watchdog on Thursday said that it is "looking into" the government's recent announcement that it had met Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's target to clear the country's asylum backlog by the end of 2023, a claim strongly contested by the Opposition.

Earlier this week, the UK Home Office said that 112,000 asylum cases were processed in the past year, which exceeded Sunak's initial target of 92,000 applications pending at the end of 2022.

However, the Opposition Labour Party had contested this and accused the government of "misleading" the public. It has now emerged that a formal complaint is likely to have been raised with the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), which independently monitors the use of official statistics.

"The Office for Statistics Regulation confirmed it is looking into the government announcement about the

asylum backlog," said a

spokesperson for OSR. While the OSR can ask for additional information from the Home Office, it does not have the power to compel data to be provided. It can, however, withdraw the high quality "kitemark" it provides the Home Office with reference to their statistics released over the course of the year.

In a statement from Tuesday the Home Office claimed that fundamental changes to the decision-making process and boosting efficiency resulted in the highest annual number of "substantive" asylum decisions in a year since 2002. It cited the use of stepped up processing, deploying an additional 1,200 caseworkers, meeting the target to double the number of asylum caseworkers and tripling productivity to ensure more illegal migrants are returned to their country of origin quicker.

All cases in the so-called "legacy backlog" were said to have been reviewed, with 86,800 deci-

sions made. In one four-week period from November 20 to December 17, 2023, there were 20,481 initial asylum decisions made, this is more than the number of asylum decisions made in the entirety of 2021, the Home Office statement said.

Around 4,537 claims from the so-called legacy backlog still needed a decision but Sunak's spokesperson at 10 Downing Street said that since these had been reviewed, the government considers them as "cleared".

The government describes these as complex cases, typically involving "asylum seekers presenting as children where age verification is taking place; those with serious medical issues; or those with suspected past convictions, where checks may reveal criminality that would bar asylum".

"I said that this government would clear the backlog of asylum decisions by the end of 2023. That's exactly what we've done," Sunak said on Tuesday.

Indian origin deputy director pleads guilty of cheating Football Association of Singapore

Singapore, Jan 04 (PTI):

An Indian-origin former deputy director at the Football Association of Singapore (FAS) has pleaded guilty to 15 cheating charges involving supplies to the sporting body through a company he owned.

Another 30 similar charges will be taken into consideration for sentencing Rikram Jit Singh Randhir Singh, 43, who exploited his position to ensure that the sporting body's supply contracts were awarded to companies linked to him or his wife.

The Singaporean admitted on Wednesday to dishonestly inducing FAS to disburse SGD 609,380, from which he and his wife, Asya Kirin Kames,

made a profit of SGD 127,896, according to a report by The Straits Times.

Their profits have been seized by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) and will be returned to FAS, the court heard.

Rikram joined FAS in December 2010 as a marketing manager and rose through the ranks to become a deputy director in July 2017.

FAS is responsible for developing and advancing football in Singapore and is partially funded by Sport Singapore a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth.

The accused met Asya, 37, while she was working in the communications department at FAS in 2013.

Extreme cold grips Nordic countries, Russia as floods hit western Europe

Copenhagen, Jan 04 (AP):

Europe experienced stark weather contrasts on Wednesday, with extreme cold and snowstorms disrupting transportation and closing schools in Scandinavia while strong winds and heavy rain in western Europe caused flooding and at least one death.

Temperatures fell below minus 40 degrees Celsius (minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit) in the Nordic region for a second day in a row Wednesday. In Kivikkjokk-rrenjarka in Swedish Lapland, the mercury dropped to minus 43.6 C (minus 46.5 F), the lowest January temperature recorded in Sweden in 25 years, Sweden's TT news

agency reported. Extremely cold temperatures, snow and gale-force winds disrupted transportation throughout the Nordic region, with several bridges closed and some train and ferry services suspended. Several schools in Scandinavia were closed.

Police across most of Denmark urged motorists to avoid unnecessary trips

as wind and snow battered the northern and western parts of the country. The wave of cold air from Siberia and the Arctic region has also swept down over western Russia, with temperatures in Moscow and other areas plummeting to minus 30 degrees Celsius (minus 22 F), well below the average temperature for early January.

Pilot accused of threatening to shoot airline captain mid-flight to make first court appearance

Salt Lake City, Jan 04 (AP):

A pilot accused of threatening to shoot a commercial airline captain who wanted to divert a flight to get medical attention for a passenger was set to make his first federal court appearance Thursday.

Former Delta Air Lines pilot Jonathan J. Dunn was indicted by a grand jury Oct. 18 and charged with interfering with a flight crew during a trip from Atlanta to Salt Lake

City in August 2022.

Dunn, who was the first officer, or co-pilot, threatened to shoot the captain during a heated argument in the cockpit over whether to change course to accommodate a passenger's medical issue.

The captain had proposed diverting to Grand Junction, Colorado, if the passenger's condition worsened, the U.S. Attorney's Office alleges in court documents. Dunn objected and

threatened multiple times to shoot the captain, whom he accused of "going crazy," the documents state. Dunn could face up to 20 years in prison. The 42-year-old pilot from Rapid City, North Dakota, had been authorized by the Transportation Security Administration to carry a firearm on board for security. The TSA has since revoked that authority, and Delta says Dunn no longer works for the airline.

कार्यालय अधिष्ठाता, छत्तीसगढ़ आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, बिलासपुर (छत्तीसगढ़) 495001

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क्र. 149/स्था/प्रशा/सिस्/2024 बिलासपुर, दिनांक 02/01/2024

Walk-In-Interview

छत्तीसगढ़ आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, बिलासपुर के अंतर्गत सुपरस्पेशलिटी चिकित्सालय, कोनो, बिलासपुर छ.ग. हेतु रिक्त शैक्षणिक एवं चिकित्सकीय पदों की भर्ती संविदा माध्यम से किये जाने हेतु अधिष्ठाता कार्यालय, सिस् बिलासपुर में प्रत्येक माह के द्वितीय गुरुवार एवं चतुर्थ गुरुवार तथा अवकाश होने की स्थिति में अगले कार्यदिवस (जनवरी माह में दिनांक 11.01.2024 एवं 25.01.24) को Walk-In-Interview आयोजित किया जाएगा। रिक्त पदों का विवरण निम्नानुसार है -

Asst Professor	Senior Resident	Medical Officer	Resident
Cardiology-2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Cardiology -5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)	8 (UR - 3, ST - 3, SC-1, OBC-1)	Pathology -6
Cardiothoracic Vascular Surgery -2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Cardiothoracic Vascular Surgery -5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)		Biochemistry - 6
Neurosurgery 2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Neurosurgery - 5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)		Microbiology - 6
Urology -2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Urology -5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)		Radiology - 6
Neurology -2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Neurology 5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)		Blood Bank - 5
Nephrology -2 (UR-1, ST-1)	Nephrology 5 (UR-2, ST-2, OBC -1)		(UR-12 (3F), ST-9 (2F), OBC-4 (1F), SC-4 (1F))
Anaesthesia -8 (UR-3, ST-3, SC-1, OBC-1)	Anaesthesia -10 (UR-4 (1F), ST-3, SC-1, OBC-2)		

चिन्हित जानकारी संस्थान की वेबसाइट www.cimsbilaspur.ac.in पर उपलब्ध है। पदों के स्वयं एवं अर्द्धांश के संबंध में जानकारी अधिष्ठाता कार्यालय, सिस्, बिलासपुर के दूरभाष से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

अधिष्ठाता
छत्तीसगढ़ आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान,
बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)

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ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION
(A STATUTORY BODY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)
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Website: www.aicte-india.org

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR APPROVAL PROCESS 2024-25

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) invites applications for the Academic Session 2024-25 from:

- Existing Technical Institutions / Institutions Deemed to be University / Universities (Central/State/Private) for Extension of Approval (EoA) and New Institutions seeking approval to offer programme(s)/ course(s) in Engineering and Technology, Town Planning, Design, Management, Computer Applications, Hotel Management & Catering Technology (HMCT), and Applied Arts & Crafts.
- Existing/ New Institutions/ Institutions Deemed to be University/ Universities (Central/State/Private) to obtain Approval for offering (or) intended to offer the Programme(s)/Course(s) in Computer Applications (BCA) and Management (BBA/BMS).
- Standalone Institutions / Institutions Deemed to be University/ Universities (Central/State/Private) to obtain Approval/ Recommendations/Extension of Approval for running the Programme(s)/Course(s) in Management and Computer Applications at Under Graduate/Post Graduate Level in ODL and (or) Online mode.

Stakeholders intend to establish New Technical Institution(s) and Institution(s) offering (or) intend to offer BBA/BCA/BMS Programmes/ Courses shall submit an online application on "National Single Window System (NSWS)" (<https://www.nsws.gov.in>) as per the provisions laid down in Approval Process Handbook (APH) 2024-25 to 2026-27.

Schedule for Submission of Online Applications

Particulars / Description	Start Date	End Date
Existing Technical Institutions/Universities	27-12-2023	31-01-2024
New Technical Institutions/Universities	27-12-2023	31-01-2024
New/Existing Technical Institutions/Universities(with penalty)	01-02-2024	07-02-2024
New/Existing Institutions intend to offer /offering BBA/ BCA/BMS with (or) without other Programme(s)/Course(s)	27-12-2023	26-02-2024

NOTE: All Higher Education Institutions are requested to visit AICTE Website @ www.aicte-india.org > Home > Quick link: Approval Process 2024-27" for more details.

Advt. No: Regulation Bureau/AICTE/01/(01)2024
CBC 2130091/0001/2324

Prof. RAJIVE KUMAR
Member Secretary



CENTRAL Chronicle

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Shielding Our Borders

The Crucial Role of Anti-Drone Technology

In an era of evolving security threats, where the boundaries of conflict are no longer confined to traditional battlefields, the significance of cutting-edge technology cannot be overstated. It is with a sense of urgency that we address the impending deployment of anti-drone technology along our borders, specifically the International Border with Pakistan in Punjab and the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. The rise in drone incursions across our borders has been a cause for grave concern. The Border Security Force (BSF) reported a staggering increase in drone sightings, with 268 incidents in 2022 compared to just 49 in 2020 and 109 in 2021. These drones have been exploited by our adversaries in Pakistan as tools of infiltration, carrying narcotics, arms, and ammunition into our territory. The need for a robust countermeasure to combat this threat has become undeniable. The memories of the June 27, 2021, drone attack on the Indian Air Force Station in Jammu still linger in our collective consciousness. This audacious attack, executed using low-flying drones armed with improvised explosive devices, served as a grim reminder of the evolving nature of warfare. It is imperative that we equip our security forces with the means to detect, track, and neutralize such threats swiftly and effectively. Additionally, the recent escalation of drone attacks in the Red Sea, led by Iran-backed Houthi rebels, underscores the global dimension of this threat. Even commercial merchant ships in the Arabian Sea have not been spared from these malicious drone attacks. India, with its vast coastline and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean, cannot afford to remain complacent in the face of this emerging menace. The deployment of anti-drone technology represents a critical step forward in our defense capabilities. The government is diligently working to finalize this technology, with trials currently underway. The fact that these trials encompass three different types of anti-drone systems showcases our commitment to leaving no stone unturned in safeguarding our borders. The deployment, estimated to occur within the next six months, holds immense promise. Counter-unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS) technology, which forms the cornerstone of our anti-drone strategy, can neutralize drones through two distinct approaches. Firstly, it can block communication lines, rendering the hostile drone inert and incapacitated. Secondly, it has the capability to down the drone itself, ensuring that it poses no further threat. Drones are not limited to carrying arms and explosives; they are increasingly being used for espionage, reconnaissance, and even the transport of contraband such as narcotics and counterfeit currency. Thus, the deployment of anti-drone technology serves a dual purpose - defending our military installations and protecting our civilian population. In the ever-evolving landscape of conflict, technology has become the arbiter of power. Our adversaries have not hesitated to exploit the potential of drones to further their nefarious objectives. Therefore, our investment in anti-drone technology is not just a strategic imperative; it is a moral obligation to ensure the safety and security of our nation. The imminent deployment of anti-drone technology is a testament to our resolve to protect our sovereignty and defend our nation from all threats, no matter how unconventional they may be. Our borders are our first line of defense, and the time to fortify them with state-of-the-art anti-drone measures is now.

Market value of saving lives

Sujit De

Arunachalam Muruganantham is a real-life hero. He invented a low-cost sanitary pad-making machine. His mini-machines can manufacture sanitary pads for less than a third of the cost of commercial pads. Arunachalam generated awareness in rural areas about the need for hygienic practices regarding menstruation. His machine-made cost-effective sanitary napkins not only improved women's health but also gave women an opportunity to earn by selling those napkins. A Bollywood film titled 'Pad Man' was made on his life. It was reported that the actor who did the role of Arunachalam earned Rs 40 crore for acting in that film. Now, we will shift our focus from one to a dozen real-life heroes. When 41 labourers were trapped behind a 57m-thick barrier of debris that defeated all technology-based efforts to drill beyond 45m, the 12 rat-hole miners rescued them from the tunnel in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi. They did it by opening up the unyielding mountain debris by their courage, skill, patience, endurance and perseverance. Their heroic act freed the trapped workers after their 16-day ordeal inside the tunnel when the whole world was on tenterhooks for the results of the rescue operation. The 12 rat-hole miners Munna Qureshi, Monu Kumar, Jatin, Nasir Khan, Feroze Qureshi, Debender Kumar, Saurabh, Wakeel Hassan, Irfad Ansari, Ankur, Naseem Malik and Rashid Ansari worked at a stretch for nearly 24 hours squatting inside a narrow steel pipe of 800mm diameter on their toes, crouching as low as possible with their knees folded to clear the debris with handheld tools to rescue the trapped workers. A Lagaan like movie can be made on this story. I say Lagaan like because of the similarities between the number of heroes in Lagaan and in the tunnel rescue. In Lagaan, apart from the main hero who acted in the leading role of a cricket team captain, there were other 10 actors who played in the roles of other members of the 11 member cricket team. It is reported that the leading actor of that movie, now charges Rs 100 to 150 crore for his films beside taking 70 percent of the profit. We can make a rough guess at how many crores the actors might charge to act in a film on the successful rescue operation at the Silkyara Bend-Barkot tunnel in Uttarkashi. But there are no prizes for guessing how much each of the rat-hole miners got after saving real human lives and making the seemingly impossible become possible. Each of the rescue workers was awarded Rs 50 thousand. Beside this nothing more - no permanent employment - no house was given or promised. Wakeel Hassan, proprietor of the Delhi-based agency that provided 12 rat-hole miners for the rescue operation, said, "We have decided not to cash the cheques for Rs 50,000 that chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami handed to each of us at a function in Dehradun on Thursday. I had reacted to him about the paltry sum given to us and he said he would think about it. We are awaiting his decision." Had they entertained people by saving lives in a movie they would have been rich by now. Or if they could rescue an IPL team from a certain defeat to victory, they would have earned a bomb in the next round of IPL player auction. In the IPL player auction for 2024, one player got Rs 24 crore 75 lakh, another Rs 20 crore 50 lakh, yet another got Rs 14 crore and so on. This is called valuejudgement! While entertaining people with a movie or a cricket match deserves crores of rupees; saving human lives cannot be rewarded with more than thousands. Alas, people cannot be entertained by the act of real heroes who save real lives. So let people wait until a movie is made on the tunnel rescue mission. Certainly that movie on the Herculean task of rescuing 41 real lives by 12 actors would be a real thriller and worth spending money for. Though the real mission failed to fetch more than thousands, the actors in the movie would certainly be honoured with crores for giving the audience goose pimples. I really admire actors and players for their painstaking endeavors to translate their potential into reality. But I feel terribly sad about how real-life heroes are being treated.

Central Chronicle invites articles, write-ups, and comments on a wide range of issues for our editorial page. Submissions should be between 800-900 words in length. In addition, we welcome letters to the editor for this page. While letters may be edited for clarity, we aim to preserve the integrity of the original message, and ask that they be kept to around 50-60 words. Submissions can be sent via emailto:editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com.

WORLD BRAILLE DAY



Visually-impaired students of Durgabai Deshmukh College of Special Education during an interactive session with Lady Irwin College on World Braille Day, in New Delhi, Thursday, Jan. 4.

DigiLocker: An Effective Document Wallet to Empower Citizens



PROF. SUNIL GOYAL



DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) under Digital India program. DigiLocker aims at 'Digital Empowerment' of citizen by providing access to authentic digital documents to citizen's digital document wallet. DigiLocker is a secure cloud based platform for storage, sharing and verification of documents & certificates. The issued documents in DigiLocker system are deemed to be at par with original physical documents as per Rule 9A of the Information Technology (Preservation and Retention of Information by Intermediaries providing Digital Locker facilities) Rules, 2016 notified on February 8, 2017 vide G.S.R. 711(E). There are various benefits to citizens, among them are - Important Documents Anytime, Anywhere! Authentic Documents, Legally at Par with Originals, Digital Document Exchange with the consent of the citizen, Faster service Delivery-Government Benefits, Employment, Financial Inclusion, Education, and Health.

There are various benefits to Agencies also such as - Reduced Administrative Overhead : Aimed at the concept of paperless governance. It reduces the administrative overhead by minimizing the use of paper and curtailing the verification process, Digital Transformation : Provides trusted issued documents. Issued Documents available via DigiLocker are fetched in real-time directly from the issuing

agency, Secure Document Gateway : Acts as a secure document exchange platform like payment gateway between trusted issuer and trusted Requester/Verifier with the consent of the citizen, and Real Time Verification : Provides a verification module enabling government agencies to verify data directly from issuers after obtaining user consent.

DigiLocker uses many tools, APIs & services for providing its document sharing & verification capability. ownCloud : ownCloud is free, open source software that provides universal access to your files through a web interface. User accounts and document uploading in DigiLocker is based on ownCloud, Jharkhand Police : Jharkhand Police under the State Government of Jharkhand has a state-of-the-art data center facility. DigiLocker uses this facility for its development and test environments, UIDAI : Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) provides a 12 digit unique identity number called Aadhaar to the residents of India. DigiLocker uses authentication and KYC services of Aadhaar to establish account holder's identity, Parallel Labs : Parallel Labs conducted Design Sprints to reimagine the product experience of DigiLocker app with the goal of improving brand image, user adoption and to simplify on-boarding, NIC : National Informatics Centre (NIC) is a premier organization of Government of India which provides IT and IT infrastructure

services. DigiLocker is hosted in the National Data Centre provided by NIC, C-DAC : The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) is a research and development organization under the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Govt of India. SMS gateway services of DigiLocker are provided by CDAC.

DigiLocker along with the issuance of documents also allows residents to upload their own electronic documents. The Digital India Program's key vision areas are to "offer shareable private space on a public cloud" and to "digitize all citizens' documents and data and make them available in real-time." This means that "giving citizens simple access to a shared private space on a public cloud can substantially aid process reengineering via paperless procedures." Government documents can be issued in verifiable electronic format and stored in federated e-Document repositories; people can digitally save their documents, certifications, and so on and share them with public agencies or others without having to physically submit them.

This method of 'e-Document repositories' and 'DigiLocker' would substantially increase citizen convenience and usher in paperless transactions throughout the whole public services ecosystem. All of this must be done in conjunction with proper user authentication, audits, and other security best practices. This simple access to digital resources guarantees that individuals are not required to submit government documents or certifications that are already available in physical form with any government department/institution.

The citizen should not be required to present certified copies of his/her educational credentials when filling out an application form, but rather give details of these certificates that the concerned agency may view using the resource identifier provided by the person. Alternatively, departments that wish to verify any of the issued citizen documents or certificates can become DigiLocker requestors, allowing them to

access and verify the documents of citizens in real-time as well as in machine readable format from the single source of truth, which is the issuing agency or organization. This is only the start of a new era of faceless and contactless service delivery. DigiLocker is constantly improving with the goal of enabling faster delivery of government services. It is being used in novel ways to make citizens' lives easier.

Ministry of Education has designated DigiLocker as the Sole National Academic Depository (NAD) (March 2020). Academic Bank of Credits shall completely be handled by DigiLocker. Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) has initiated acceptance of e-Documents from DigiLocker as part of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) Guidelines Reserve Bank of India. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has notified the acceptance of Officially Valid Documents (OVD) from DigiLocker for the KYC process (April 2020). Ministry of Civil Aviation (Bureau of Civil Aviation Security) has also started acceptance of photo identity documents from DigiLocker account of departing air passengers (October 2018). Indian Railways is also accepting digital Aadhaar and Driving License from Digital Locker as a proof of identity of passengers for undertaking journey by train (June 2018). Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) is also started acceptance of DL, Registration Certificate or other documents presented through DigiLocker (August 2018); Driving License and Vehicle Registration Certificate can now be accessed through Mobile App (Sept 2016) State/UT Transport Departments. As far as the DigiLocker National Statistics is concerned there are more than 228.37 million Users, more than 6.28 billion documents have been issued till date, there exists more than 1684 issuers, and 196 requestors.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pakistan's games

When it comes to the crunch, Islamabad tries acting tough on terror players. The sentencing of dreaded terror mastermind and Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed in 2020 and 2022 had the unmistakable imprint of the Pakistan government. This was aimed at placating global bodies like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) that is seized of the policies to monitor and fight money laundering and terror financing. Islamabad never acceded to New Delhi's requests to extradite Saeed. That's why its rejection of India's fresh request to hand over Saeed has not come as a surprise. As is its wont, Pakistan has cited the absence of a bilateral treaty for its "decision". It's worthwhile to remember that both LeT and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), another Pakistan bred terror group, find themselves in the Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) list of the United States since 2001. So, while Islamabad is trying all tricks of the trade to protect its big-time terror players like Hafiz Saeed, countries like the US and India have made sure that it is systematically isolated. And, that is the way to go.

Dr Ganapathi Bhat, Akola

Deciphering 'Deepfakes'

Deepfake videos of political leaders and informational campaigns are on the rise, eroding public trust through misinformation and undermining political leaders, influencing voters to believe fake videos are real. India is among the top five most vulnerable countries to deepfakes. However, The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has identified a four-pronged approach to addressing deepfakes: detection, prevention, reporting, and awareness. However, combating deepfake menace requires political, social, technological, and legal interventions. Proactive steps need more emphasis than countermeasures, emphasising prevention over cure.

Ibne Farooq, Ausanpur

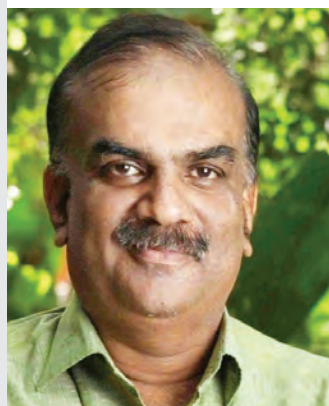
New Law in Public's Favour

Truckers in several states launched a three-day protest against the "stringent provision" on Monday. It is important to understand the new laws that is a driver who accidentally hits a person and subsequently informs police or takes the victim to the nearest hospital will not be prosecuted under the stringent provision of the recently enacted Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). However, if the drivers runs away from the spot without informing the police, the strict provision of the law will be slapped. Similarly, strong provision will be slapped in cases of drunken driving and subsequent accident. This new law is in the favour of innocent people who are moving to court from many years after dangerous accidents. Therefore, there is no need to amendment because the new provision of the hit-and-run cases where punishment has been extended to 10 years has been framed following the observation of the Supreme Court.

Tauqueer Rahmani, Mumbai

2024 Indian General Elections

A Look at the Southern Indian Scenario



Dr. Vasishth MC

Everything is set for the Lok Sabha elections of 2024. Elections to choose the 543 members of the 18th Lok Sabha will take place in 28 states and 8 union territories in the months of April and May of 2024. The primary election battle at the national level is between the Congress-led India coalition and the BJP-led NDA. However, political circumstances, coalitions, and formulas vary from one state or region to the next. The political climate is extremely complicated in certain states. Let's look at the political climate of southern India, or the area south of the Vindhya Mountains.

Kerala
In Kerala, a state renowned for its political literacy, there are three fronts competing in the election: the BJP-led New Democratic Alliance (NDA), the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), and the CPI (M)-led Left Democratic Front. However, UDF and LDF are engaged in a major competition. Out of the 20 Lok Sabha seats up for election in 2019, UDF won 19, and LDF only won one. UDF received 96,29,030 votes, LDF received 71,56,387 votes, and NDA received 31,71,792 votes. In Kerala, the voting difference between the UDF, LDF, and NDA is substantial. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the Indian National Congress secured 16 of the 19 seats won by UDF, followed by the Union Muslim League with 2, Kerala Congress (Mani) with 1, and the CPI (M) won the lone LDF seat. All 20 seats were contested by the NDA, with the BJP contesting 15, the Bharath Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS) contesting 4, and the Kerala Congress contesting 1. With the exception of the state capital Trivandrum seat, where Kummanam Rajasekharan, the BJP candidate, received 3,16,142 votes to finish in second place, all 19 constituencies saw NDA candidates finish in third place.

The BJP had strong showings in constituencies like Pathanamthitta (2,97,396), Trissur (2,93,822), Attingal

(2,48,081), and Palakkad (2,18,566). Despite coming in second in Trivandrum, the BJP trailed the winning Congress candidate, Shashi Tharoor, by almost one lakh votes.

Tamil Nadu
The primary contestants in Tamil Nadu are the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)-led political front and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)-headed India alliance. AIADMK participated in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections as an NDA party but severed ties with the BJP in September 2023. In the upcoming months, the BJP could secure AIADMK as an electoral ally. If not, there is little chance that the BJP would win the next elections in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu has 39 Lok Sabha seats. Out of these, the UPA won 38 in the 2019 elections, with the DMK winning 28, the INC winning 8, the CPI (M) winning 2, and the IUML and VCK (Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi) each getting one. Then, which the AIADMK candidate prevailed by a margin of 76,672 votes, was the only seat held by the NDA. In Kerala, the Congress and IUML are a part of the UDF, while the CPI (M) and CPI make up the LDF. However, they are a member of a large alliance in Tamil Nadu.

Puducherry
The Puducherry Lok Sabha seat encompasses the entire Union Territory of

Puducherry, which includes the districts of Puducherry and Karaikal (both of which are close to Tamil Nadu), Yanam (in the Telugu-speaking region), and Mahe (in the north of Kerala). Puducherry frequently favored the Congress party. All India N. Rangaswamy Congress (AINRC) candidate K. Narayanaswamy was defeated by Congress candidate V. Vaithilingam in the 2019 elections by a margin of around 1,97,000 votes.

Lakshadweep
The entire Union Territory of Lakshadweep, consisting of 36 islands, is covered by the Lakshadweep Lok Sabha constituency. Lakshadweep was a part of the Malabar district until 1957. In its inaugural election in 1967, P.M. Sayeed, an independent, prevailed. However, he was elected to Congress without facing any opposition in the 1971 elections. In the most recent election (2019), Mohammed Faizal of the NCP defeated M.H. Sayeed, a Congress candidate and the son of former MP P.M. Sayeed, by a margin of 823 votes.

In Lakshadweep, the Congress and NCP engaged in combat despite being members of the UPA, or India coalition. 2019 saw contests from the BJP, CPI (M), Janata Dal (United), and CPI. Abdul Khader Haji, the BJP contender, received barely 125 votes.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana
After the division of Andhra Pradesh

into two distinct states in 2014, Andhra Pradesh has 25 Lok Sabha seats, and Telangana has 17 seats. In the 2019 elections, the YSR Congress easily won the election in Andhra Pradesh, winning 22 of the 25 seats, while the TDP won just three seats. In Telangana, AIMIM won the Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat in the 2019 elections, while BRS won nine seats, BJP four, and Congress three. In the upcoming elections, Congress may have a better chance in Telangana due to its recent victory in the assembly elections.

Karnataka
The BJP stronghold in southern India is Karnataka. In the 2019 elections, the BJP won 25 of the 28 seats, and actress Sumalatha, an independent candidate supported by the BJP, won the Mandya seat, giving them 26 seats overall. In the upcoming elections, the BJP has developed electoral relations with the Janata Dal (S), which is undoubtedly to their advantage. This alliance is expected to strengthen their position in the state.

In short, the southern part of the Indian subcontinent has 131 seats, nearly one-fourth of the total members of the Indian parliament. This region is the stronghold of the India alliance and regional political parties and is considered to be the weakest area for the BJP. If the NDA hopes to serve a third consecutive term, they must retain the 30 seats they won in 2019.

BRIEF

Coffee Day Enterprises

New Delhi: Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd has reported a total default of Rs 433.91 crore on payments of interest and repayment of principal amount on loans from banks, financial institutions, and unlisted debt securities for the December quarter. Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd (CDEL), which is paring its debts through asset resolution, in a regulatory update said "the delay in debt servicing is due to liquidity crisis". CDEL reported a default of Rs 183.36 crore on the payment of the principal amount on loans or revolving facilities like cash credit from banks or financial institutions as on December 31, 2023.

Medway Hospitals

Mumbai: Medway Hospitals secured its first round of institutional equity funding of USD 5 million from a round led by Kyra Ventures, and family offices. The Chennai-based multi-specialty hospital chain Medway operates eight facilities with 500 beds in Tamil Nadu and Seemandra, with each unit having around 50-100 beds. This investment will help accelerate expansion plans and reach 1,000 beds by 2026, its Chairman Dr T Palaniappan said on Thursday.

Bandhan Bank

Kolkata: Private lender Bandhan Bank reported a growth of 18.6 per cent in its loans and advances during the third quarter ending December 31 at Rs 1,15,964 crore. In a regulatory filing on Thursday, the Kolkata-based bank said the figure stood at Rs 97,787 crore during the year-ago period. Total deposits increased 14.8 per cent to Rs 1,17,422 crore during the quarter under review, it said.

Juniper Green Energy

New Delhi: Juniper Green Energy has inked an initial pact with the Gujarat government to develop 1GW of wind and solar projects entailing investment of Rs 8,000 crore. Juniper Green Energy, a leading player in the renewable energy sector, has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Gujarat government during the Investment Promotion Activity for Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2024, a company statement said on Thursday.

Lord's Mark Industries

Mumbai: Lord's Mark Industries Private Ltd., a diversified business group, has won the contract to set up LED-based smart solar street lighting system at Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the Ayodhya Ram Temple inauguration. The Ayodhya project is a part of series of contracts which Lord's Mark Industries has been awarded under Ayodhya Solar City Program by Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency (UPNEDA), Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Nepal, India sign long-term power agreement

Kathmandu, Jan 04 (PTI):

Nepal on Thursday signed a long-term agreement that will facilitate the export of 10,000 MW of electricity to India in the next 10 years during the two-day visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to the Himalayan nation.

The agreement on power export was inked in the presence of Jaishankar and Nepalese Minister for Energy, Water Resources, and Irrigation Shakti Bahadur Basnet during a bilateral meeting here.

Nepal's Energy Secretary Gopal Sigdel and his Indian counterpart Pankaj Agrawal inked the bilateral agreement that will facilitate the export of 10,000 MW of electricity from Nepal to India in the next 10 years.



Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during a meeting, in Kathmandu, Nepal, Thursday, Jan. 4.

The two countries had reached an understanding on the electricity export during Prime Minister Pushpakamal Dahal Prachanda's visit to India from May 31 to June 3 last year. Both sides had signed several major pacts including one on increasing New

Delhi's import of power from the neighbouring country to 10,000 MW in the next 10 years from the current 450 MW.

There are multiple well-endowed rivers originating in the higher reaches of the Himalayas the four main being Mahakali,

Karnali, Sapta Gandaki, and Sapta Kosi flowing through different valleys and then cutting across plains before entering India to meet River Ganga. India has helped Nepal develop multiple hydropower projects on these high-volume rivers and more projects are in the pipeline; and the power export agreement comes as the next step in the bilateral relations.

Later in the afternoon, Jaishankar is scheduled to meet top political leaders, including two former prime ministers, Nepali Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba, and CPN-UML chairman K P Sharma Oli.

Earlier in the morning, Jaishankar called on President Ramchandra Paudel and Prime Minister Prachanda at their respective offices.

Equity investors become richer by Rs 3.24 lakh cr as markets rally

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI):

Investors' wealth grew by Rs 3.24 lakh crore on Thursday as the BSE Sensex jumped nearly 1 per cent after a two-day slide.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 490.97 points or 0.69 per cent to settle at 71,847.57. During the day, it rallied 598.19 points or 0.83 per cent to 71,954.79.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies climbed Rs 3,24,010.1 crore to hit an all-time high of Rs 3,68,32,843.41 crore.

"Market bounced back after the last two negative trading days led by strong monthly business updates of leading banks, emphasizing robust credit growth. The realty sector was the highest gainer in anti-



robust demand in the residential category, which was supported by healthy housing loans disbursement data announced by banks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance jumped 4.44 per cent and NTPC climbed 3.54 per cent. IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, Tata Motors, Nestle, Power Grid, Infosys, Bajaj Finserv and HDFC Bank were the

other major winners. HCL Tech, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel and Hindustan Unilever were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the negative territory.

Goyal likely to visit Kolkata on Jan 6



Kolkata, Jan 04 (PTI):

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is scheduled to visit Kolkata on January 6 to inaugurate a government office building complex and meet representatives of jute mills and Tea Board, officials said on Thursday. Goyal, who also holds portfolios of consumer affairs, food and public distribution and textiles, is slated to inaugurate 'Patsan Bhavan' which will house the Jute Commissioner's office and

Hold meetings with jute mills, Tea Board officials

headquarters of Jute Corporation of India and National Jute Board. All three entities come under his ministry.

After inaugurating the bhavan, the minister is expected to hold meetings with jute mills and the Tea Board representatives, both of which will take place at a hotel in New Town, according to an itinerary.

During the proposed meeting, representatives of mills are likely to raise demand for the implementation of a tariff provision report on the pricing of jute goods procured by the government, industry sources said.

NHPC pledges to invest Rs 4,000 cr in 750 MW Kuppa Hydro Storage Project in Gujarat

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI):

NHPC has inked an initial pact to invest Rs 4,000 crore in 750 MW Kuppa Pumped Hydro Storage Project at Chhota Udaipur in Gujarat.

Taking a step towards clean and green energy, NHPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gujarat Power Corporation (GPC) for investment in Kuppia Pumped Hydro Storage Project (750 MW) on January 3, 2024, a company statement said.

According to the statement, the MoU was signed at an event organised at the Secretariat in Gandhinagar under the aegis of 'Vibrant Gujarat'.

In the presence of Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, and state Energy Minister Kanubhai Desai, the

MoU was signed by Arun Mahesh Babu, Managing Director, GPC, and V Srivastava, Executive Director, Renewable Energy and Green Hydrogen, NHPC, the statement said.

As per the terms of the MoU, the NHPC shall invest an estimated Rs 4,000 crore in the proposed 750 MW Kuppia Pumped Hydro Storage Project at Chhota Udaipur, Gujarat.

The implementation of this project will create significant employment opportunities and boost the local economy in the area, the statement said.

The NHPC Ltd is India's leading hydropower company with a total installed capacity of 7,097.2 MW of renewable energy through its 25 power stations, including 1,520 MW through subsidiaries.

Rupee rises 7 paise to close at 83.23 against US dollar

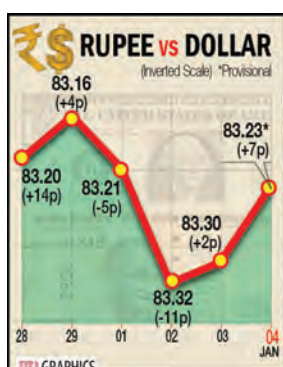
Mumbai, Jan 04 (PTI):

The rupee appreciated 7 paise to close at 83.23 against the US dollar on Thursday, helped by a bullish trend in domestic equities and weakness of the American currency in the overseas market.

However, rising crude oil prices capped sharp gains for the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened flat at 83.30 against the greenback.

The rupee oscillated between an intra-day low of 83.32 and a high of 83.21 against the greenback and finally settled at 83.23 against the dollar, higher by 7 paise from its previous close.



second day in a trot following a weaker greenback after mixed signals from the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting minutes.

"Better-than-expected service PMI number pushed the euro higher versus the US dollar. The rupee also accumulated the gain along with other

Asian currencies after Eurozone data. However, the local unit trimmed the afternoon gains amid higher crude oil prices and importers' dollar demand," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said, adding that "Spot USD/INR is expected to consolidate between 83.10 and 83.50".

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.32 per cent lower at 102.16.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 1.05 per cent to USD 79.07 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex surged 490.97 points, or 0.69 per cent, to settle at 71,847.57 points.

Jio adds 31.6 lakh mobile subscribers in Oct; VIL loses 20.4 lakh: TRAI data

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI): India's largest telecom operator Reliance Jio added 31.59 lakh mobile users while rival Bharti Airtel's subscriber gain came in at 3.52 lakh in October 2023, as per monthly subscriber data by TRAI.

There was no relief for the troubled telco Vodafone Idea on subscriber front, as it lost 20.44 lakh wireless subscribers in October.

With the addition of 31.59 lakh users, Jio's total wireless subscriber count climbed to 45.23 crore in October from 44.92 crore in September.

Sunil Mittal-led Airtel's wireless subscriber gain of 3.52 lakh pushed up the telco's user tally to 37.81 crore in October.

SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC MODULES



Employees work on solar photovoltaic modules that will be exported at a factory in Lianyungang, in China's eastern Jiangsu province on January 4.

European markets were trading in the green. The US markets ended lower on Wednesday.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.49 per cent and smallcap index climbed 1.04 per cent.

Among the indices, realty zoomed 6.61 per cent, utilities jumped 2.55 per cent, telecommunication (2.09 per cent), services (1.68 per cent), financial services (1.30 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.82 per cent).

Auto and metal were the laggards.

"With economic activity remaining buoyant, expectations of a healthy corporate earnings announcement could keep the mood upbeat going ahead," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Symbiosis opens door for UG courses

Pune, Jan 04: Symbiosis International (Deemed University) (SIU) has announced the application dates of its renowned entrance tests, facilitating admission to various undergraduate programmes across institutes under its legacy. These examinations comprise SET - General (Symbiosis Entrance Test), SET - Law, referred to as the Symbiosis Law Admission Test (SLAT), and the Symbiosis Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Exam (SITEEE). These are conducted in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode across 76 cities all over India. Aspiring candidates can enroll for the respective tests by accessing the official registration links pro-

vided below along with detailed information about each test. Symbiosis International (Deemed University) initiated the registration process for SET 2024 on December 13, 2023. The application window will remain open for approximately four months, with aspiring candidates able to apply online until April 12, 2024. The SET is scheduled to take place on May 5, 2024 (Sunday), and May 11, 2024 (Saturday). Aspiring candidates can complete their registration through the official website: www.set-test.org/. The Symbiosis Law Admission Test 2024 or SLAT 2024 will be conducted on May 5, 2024 (Sunday) and May 11, 2024 (Saturday) in CBT mode at SLAT 2024 Test centers.

Gold slumps Rs 420; silver plummets Rs 1,900

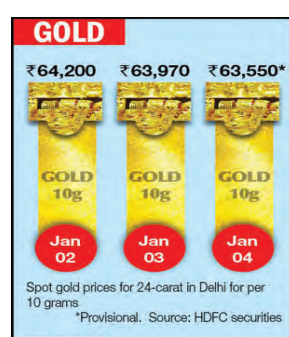
New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI):

Gold price slumped Rs 420 to Rs 63,550 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid weak cues in the international markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 63,970 per 10 grams.

Silver also plummeted Rs 1,900 to Rs 76,900 per kilogram, while it had closed at Rs 78,800 per kg in the previous close.

"Gold edged lower on Thursday, with spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets trading at Rs 63,550/10 grams, down by Rs 420 following bearish trends in the overseas markets," Saumil Gandhi,



senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

In the global markets, gold and silver were quoting lower at USD 2,042 per ounce and USD 23.05 per ounce, respectively.

Gandhi said that Comex gold prices fell to a two-week low as uncertainty around the US

Federal Reserve's plan to reduce interest rates contributed to prevailing risk-off sentiment among traders.

There is uncertainty on interest rate cut timeframe after the release of the minutes of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting held last month.

IndiGo withdraws fuel charge; airfares to reduce by up to Rs 1,000

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI):

The country's largest airline IndiGo on Thursday announced the withdrawal of fuel charge that was collected from passengers, a move that will reduce airfares by up to Rs 1,000 on certain long routes.

In the wake of a spike in jet fuel prices, the airline started levying the fuel charge on each domestic and international ticket from October 6, 2023. The quantum of the fuel charge varied from Rs 300 to up to Rs 1,000 depending on the distance.

The airline, which is expanding its operations, said the fuel charge has been withdrawn with effect from January 4, due to the recent reduction in Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices.

"As ATF prices are dynamic, we will continue to adjust our fares and components thereof, to respond to any change in prices or market conditions," IndiGo said in a statement.

Fuel cost accounts for a significant chunk of a carrier's operational costs.

Last year, IndiGo was also the first Indian carrier to announce that they would levy fuel charge to offset the spike in ATF prices.

A fuel charge of Rs 300 was levied from each passenger if the flight dis-

tance was up to 500 kilometres and the amount was Rs 400 for a distance of 501-1,000 kilometres.

The fuel charge was Rs 550 for 1,001-1,500 kilometres, Rs 650 for 1,501-2,500 kilometres and Rs 800 for 2,501-3,500 kilometres.

The amount was Rs 1,000 for 3,501 kilometres and above. With the removal of the fuel charge, the overall ticket price for an IndiGo passenger will come down by at least Rs 300 and up to Rs 1,000.

In recent times, there have been concerns in various quarters about rising airfares at a time when the domestic air traffic is on an upward trajectory.

Public and rural welfare will come true through VBSY: Collector

Central Chronicle News

Korea, Jan 04: District Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh had instructed the officers in the deadline meeting that everyone should be present in their office during office hours. Giving strict instructions to the officers of all departments including SDM, Tehsildar, Naib Tehsildar, District Education Officer, Women and Child Development Officer, Block level officers, teachers, Patwari, Revenue Officer, doctors the Collector said that all the people should remain in their offices and be present in the office on time.

The Collector gave instructions to resolve the revenue related matters very quickly and instructions were also given to



immediately resolve the pending cases in Baikunthpur Tehsil office. Expressing concern over the cases pending in the Revenue Court, the Collector said that these cases are increasing due to the indifferent attitude of the officers. He directed the Sonhat and Baikunthpur SDMs to

immediately and instructions were also given to inform about the proceedings.

Regarding the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, the collector instructed the officials that officers from all the departments, especially the Food Department and Revenue Department, should be present on the spot so that



the eligible beneficiaries can get the benefits and can also give correct information to the villagers. This Yatra will be for the public interest and rural interest as well as the dream of villagers, farmers and needy sections will come true, in such a situation it is the responsibility of all of us to make the Sankalp Yatra successful,

he said.

The LED van of Sankalp Yatra reached village Jataseamer and Dubhapani Gram Panchayat of Baikunthpur development block and village Latma, Barwar Paharpara, Sundarpur of Sonhat development block where hundreds of villagers and farmers were present in large numbers.

Gram Panchayat Machanpar takes pledge of developed India

Central Chronicle News

Dongargaon, Jan 04: Gram Panchayat Machanpar took pledge of developed India, under Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra which reached the school premises of Gram Panchayat Machanpar of Dongargaon district area on January 2, where Gram Panchayat officials and villagers welcomed Sankalp Rath. Chief guest Dinesh Gandhi, district member Jageshwar Yadav and Meenakshi Deshlahare had the dignified presence in this program.

The present gathering was given information about the program through a projector and the schemes were explained in detail through the stalls of various departments. After that, my story was told by the beneficiaries of Meri Zubani



in relation to the benefits they were getting from various government schemes.

The presentation of Dharti Kahe Pukar on promoting organic farming and not using chemicals was presented in an interesting manner by the students of pre-

secondary school. Chief Guest Dinesh Gandhi, in the presence of the chief guest, explained the purpose of the Sankalp Yatra in detail to the public and official employees and he said that only the fulfillment of the objectives of the villagers would be the meaningfulness of the Sankalp Yatra.

Collector conducts surprise inspection of district hospital



Central Chronicle News

Korea, Jan 04: District Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh conducted a surprise inspection of the district hospital and checked presence of doctors and quality of food given to the patients and also visited the kitchen and took stock of the cleanliness.

The Collector had in-

structed the Chief Medical Officer that strict action would be taken against the absence of doctors and staff in the hospital under any circumstances and during the surprise inspection today, doctors and staff who did not arrive on time would be issued show cause notice.

The Collector has given instructions to start the e-hospital facility in the dis-

trict hospital soon and also inspected a sufficient number of CCTV cameras during the inspection of the hospital and ward.

Instructions were given to install cameras so that any kind of disturbance can be prevented. Expressing displeasure on cleanliness and irregular working style of the doctors in the District Hospital

Baikunthpur, a show cause notice was issued to the Civil Surgeon.

A show-cause notice was issued to Dr. Shalini Sharma when the per day and monthly average number of sonography of patients was very low and disappointing.

The Collector also Langeh visited the children's ward and inspected it and gave instructions to provide adequate treatment and nutritious food in coordination with the Women and Child Development Department to provide more benefits to the malnourished children.

He has also given instructions to continuously encourage patients for examination, treatment and making Ayushman cards during the Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra.

Work in mission mode to provide benefits of PMAY: Collector



Central Chronicle News

Bijapur, Jan 04: Weekly deadline meeting was held in the Collectorate hall under the chairmanship of District Collector Rajendra Kumar Katara, wherein he conducted a detailed review of the progress of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, tap water supply and other development works in the district with the departmental officers. The Collector instructed all the officers to make progress in the implementation of government

schemes and do regular monitoring.

On this occasion, Chief Executive Officer District Panchayat Ravi Kumar Sahu, SDM Bijapur Pawan Kumar Premi, all SDMs and all district CEOs and other departmental officers were present. The Collector talked about bringing progress in submitting complete documents for registration under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and for this, instructions were given to organize camps for making Aadhar cards and bank passbooks



in inaccessible villages of the district, so that eligible beneficiaries are not deprived of the benefits of the schemes.

In the aspirational block Usur, development work is being done by expediting the works of health and nutrition, education, agriculture, water resources, financial inclusion and skill development, under which, on the demand of the Health Officer, the Collector directed the District CEO for Bauriwal or wire fencing in the hospitals of village Murdanda, Lingagiri,

Tarrem and Angpalli of Usoor block.

Giving information regarding the programs to be organized in the Republic Day celebrations in the district, the Collector said that other programs like parade, PT, cultural programs, tableau exhibition will be organized in the function. He asked to complete all the preparations well in advance for the successful organization of the function like necessary arrangements, decorations, drinking water, awards, invitation cards, citations etc.

Villagers express gratitude towards Dy CM



● For bore mining

Central Chronicle News

Kawardha, Jan 04: The announcement of Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma is being implemented immediately and in sequence of the same, bore mining work was completed at the initiative of the Deputy Chief Minister in remote forest village Bokkarkhar, Niwaspur Khara. Residents of remote

Vananchal village Bokkarkhar and Niwaspur Khara have expressed gratitude to Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma.

And villagers told that due to bore mining in the village, pure drinking water will be available hitherto. It is noteworthy that Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh and Kawardha MLA Vijay Sharma, on December 30, sat on the ground with the villagers in remote

Vananchal village Bokkarkhar, Niwaspur Khara of Bodla development block and had a direct conversation with the Vananchal residents, farmers, villagers, women and youth.

Residents of Vananchal village Bokkarkhar, Niwaspur Khara had applied to Deputy Chief Minister for bore mining in the village and taking immediate action, bore mining was done.

MLA Sandeep Sahu inspires youth in sports festival

Central Chronicle News

Lavan, Jan 04: A three-day sports competition has kicked off on January 3 at the Gram Panchayat Ahilda playground, jointly organized by Gram Ahilda and Sarkhor. The event received a special boost with the presence of Kasdol MLA Sandeep Sahu, who graced the occasion as the chief guest.

The sports festival commenced with the inauguration of the Kabaddi tournament, marked by the lighting of lamp on the picture of Goddess Saraswati and the cutting of the ribbon in the presence of MLA Sandeep Sahu. Notably, the MLA didn't just offer encouragement from the sidelines but actively engaged with the children, demonstrating his passion for sports.

Addressing the young



participants, Chief Guest Sandeep Sahu highlighted the significance of sports in our lives. He emphasized that sports not only promote physical health but also foster mental, emotional, and social development.

Sahu stressed that playing sports enhances physical strength, keeps individuals healthy, and imparts es-

sential life lessons, including principles of science, psychology, organization, discipline, and morality.

Sahu acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted sports activities in schools, but now, children are gradually regaining the opportunity to engage in physical activities. He commended the Sankul-level

sports event for providing a platform for talented students to gain recognition at block, district, state, and national levels.

In our India, there are numerous types of sports, such as Kho-Kho, Kabaddi, Hockey, Cricket, Badminton, Football, and more. Whether it's cricket or hockey, India has made history in many

games. Alongside your studies, prioritize sports for a healthy life.

Sports are essential for maintaining good health. Congratulations to the event organizers. The first day featured games like Kabaddi, Kho Kho, rope race, and the second day included individual sports races, high jump, long jump, chair race, and jalebi race. On the last day, the finals and prize distribution program will take place.

The event witnessed the presence and support of several esteemed individuals, including District Panchayat member Parmeshwar Yadu, District member Komal Verma, Devi Lal Barve, Pratap Dahria, Murari Sahu, Dev Yadav, Ankit Sahu, Poshkumar, Murali Sahu, and dedicated teachers and villagers.

Ajay Chandrakar pioneers solar power for environmental good

Inaugurated solar power plant at Geetalakshmi Modern Rice Mill

Central Chronicle News

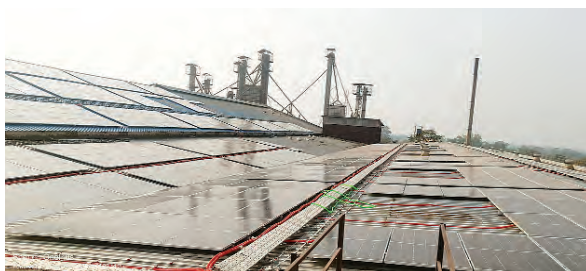
Kurud, Jan 04: In a significant stride towards a greener future, Kurud MLA Ajay Chandrakar inaugurated a state-of-the-art solar power plant at Geetalakshmi Modern Rice Mill today. Chandrakar emphasized the importance of embracing solar energy for a cleaner and more sustainable environment.

Addressing the gathering, Chandrakar stressed the need for innovative thinking to prepare the next generation effectively. He underscored the significance of not only creating employment opportunities for youth but also prioritizing skill development.



Highlighting the global concern of climate change, Chandrakar urged industrialists and young minds present to recognize the role of rice millers in mitigating pollution of all forms. He passionately advocated for a concerted effort to ensure a natural and pristine environment for future generations. Chandrakar called upon entrepreneurs to oper-

ate registered joint renewable energy ventures, enabling them to profitably sell surplus solar power to CGPDCL. This approach, combined with responsible production, consumption, and active participation in pollution control, would help secure a cleaner and more sustainable future. The Kurud industry's pioneering efforts serve as an



exemplary model for this initiative. The inauguration ceremony witnessed the presence of esteemed individuals, including Vinod Verma from Vandana Group, founder members of Geeta Lakshmi Rice Mill Shivkumar Agarwal, Anil Agarwal, Rajendra Agarwal, Akash Agarwal, Ashu Agarwal, and prominent rice millers such as

Sohendra Singh Hora, Anil Chandrakar, Sunil Agarwal, Suresh Mahawar, Kushal Sukharamani, Manoj Chandrakar, Yogesh Chandrakar, Praveen Kela, Dilip Bafna, Hitendra Kela, Kamlesh Gandhi, Praveen Bhansali, Rahul Chandrakar, Jageshwar Sinha, Balram Sahu, Sevak Ram, and Kamta Ram Sahu, among others.

Central Chronicle News

Korea, Jan 04: District Collector Vinay Kumar Langeh here inspected the newly under construction District Hospital and Mother-Child Hospital and inquired information about the completion of construction of the hospital. The Collector visited the rooms of the hospitals under construction and inspected them and also directed the officials of Public Works Department to check the material being used and directed to construct adequate flow and drain for drainage around the hospital premises so that water does not stagnate during rainy season.

He gave strict instructions to the representative of the con-



tractor and said that they should not do any food supply work at all, and also said that action would be taken if any complaint is received in the investigation. The new district hospital in Kanhanpur of Koriya district is being built with DMF at a cost of Rs 35 crore, while MCH is being constructed with the help of NHM at a cost of Rs 9 crore.

The construction of this three-storey hospital will be of great help to the patients of the district. The Collector directed the construction agency Chhattisgarh Medical Services Corporation Limited and contractor M/S A.K. to make the hospital fully equipped and to use only quality material in the construction work.

India make short work of SA at Newlands

Record historic victory in Cape Town

Cape Town, Jan 04 (PTI):

Jasprit Bumrah, India's priceless fast bowling mean machine, produced a hostile spell to guide India to a series-levelling seven-wicket victory against South Africa in the shortest game ever played in Test history.

Bumrah (6/61 in 13.5 overs), the master practitioner of fast bowling, knocked the stuffing out of South Africa's middle-order in a menacing morning spell though Aiden Markram (106 off 103 balls) fought like a lone ranger on a burning deck to take South Africa to 176 in 36.5 overs at stroke of lunch on day two.

A target of 79 even on the toughest of tracks wasn't exactly a tall order and young Yashasvi Jaiswal (28) threw his bat around before skipper Rohit Sharma (16 not out) completed the formalities in the company of Shreyas Iyer (4 not out off 6) in just 12 overs.

This was India's first victory at Newlands in seven attempts and one that would be remembered for the hostility exhibited by two Indian fast bowlers Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, who produced a career-best six-wicket haul



Indian captain Rohit Sharma and South African captain Dean Elgar pose with the trophy during presentation ceremony.

to bowl out South Africa for 55 in the first innings.

The series-levelling win gave Rohit the bragging rights of being only the second skipper after Mahendra Singh Dhoni (2010-11) to draw a series in the Rainbow Nation.

However, South Africa remains an unconquered territory for India, who have not been able to win a Test series in the country.

It was the shortest Test match ever in terms of overs bowled, bettering the previous best that involved Australia and South Africa at the MCG

way back in 1932. A total of 106.2 overs were bowled in this match while 109.2 overs were bowled in that 1932-match which Australia won. Eeerily, South Africa's first innings had lasted for 23.2 overs, just like this game.

It would be surprising if the Newlands Stadium track doesn't receive a "Below Average" rating from ICC match referee Chris Broad.

Skipper Rohit won't mind winning his first Test as a skipper in a SENA country but more importantly, the decisions

he took was a reflection of his leadership acumen.

Playing Mukesh Kumar (4 wickets) in place of Shardul Thakur was a good move and also making the bowlers realise the ideal length to bowl after the goof up in Centurion.

The way Bumrah and Siraj read the pitch in the first essay was an example how the current generation doesn't throw in the towel after a debilitating defeat. On Thursday, the ball didn't fly off the surface as much as it did on the opening day but with enough juice available to

get movement off the surface, Bumrah from his back of length approach in the first essay reverted to a more traditional fuller length deliveries to set the alarm bells ringing for the Proteas. This was his ninth five-wicket haul in Test cricket. Sensing that he could soon run out of partners once David Bedingham (11) edged one behind the stumps and Kyle Verreynne misjudged the length while going for an unnecessary pull-shot, Markram started attacking the inexperienced Mukesh Kumar (2/56 in 10 overs) and the ever-profigate Prasidh Krishna (1/27 in 4 overs). Markram, found it easy to muscle the balls through the gaps as he hit 17 fours and two mighty sixes off Prasidh. In the morning, a vintage Bumrah was in full bloom on a tailor-made surface.

Starting at 62 for 3, South Africa quickly lost their middle-order to be 111 for 7 before Markram took charge in a 51-run stand with Kagiso Rabada where he launched into every Indian bowler.

It finally took first innings hero Siraj (1/31) to induce a mistimed heave from Markram, ensuring the lead did not cross 100-run mark.

India Women vying for all-round improvement in T20Is



Navi Mumbai, Jan 04 (PTI):

With an eye on the upcoming T20 World Cup later this year, the Indian women's cricket team is gearing up for a crucial three-match series against six-time world champions Australia. The series kicks off in Navi Mumbai on Friday, and for the Harmanpreet Kaur-led Indian side, there's a lot on the line following their recent struggles. The Indian team suffered a 0-3 defeat at the hands of Australia in the recently-concluded ODI series, adding to their woes after a loss in a three-match T20I series against England. Despite their historic victories in the one-off Test matches against England and Australia, the Indian team needs significant improvement in white-ball cricket, especially

against their formidable Australian counterparts. Fielding proved to be a major weakness for India in the ODI series, as they dropped crucial catches and made errors in their DRS decisions. Their batting performance also left much to be desired, with a lack of aggression and a clear game plan against the opposition's bowling attack.

Captain Harmanpreet Kaur's form has been a concern, managing only 17 runs in three ODIs against Australia. The team has struggled to put up substantial scores, relying heavily on players like Jemimah Rodrigues and Richa Ghosh, who have been inconsistent in converting good starts into big innings. In contrast, Australia's batters like

Phoebe Litchfield and Tahlia McGrath have been in fine form, scoring three consecutive fifties each across different formats. Australia's sharp fielding skills and adaptability have also been evident in the series. For India, the performance of their new ball pair of Renuka Singh Thakur and Pooja Vastrakar will be crucial in the upcoming matches at the DY Patil Stadium, where they hope to make better use of fresher wickets and conditions. Australia, with their sights set on the upcoming T20 World Cup in Bangladesh and the 50-overs World Cup in India in 2025, aims to continue their dominance in T20Is. With a track record of 23 wins out of 31 matches against India, they remain a formidable opponent.

We are working hard to fix fitness and fielding woes: Harmanpreet

Navi Mumbai, Jan 04 (PTI):

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday said quick fixes in the fielding and fitness department were not possible but her team will plug those gaps eventually with the help of a recently appointed full-time support staff.

The team has struggled with fielding and fitness issues for a long time.

As India Women prepare to take on Australia in a three-match T20 series starting here on Friday, the focus is on how Harmanpreet ends her poor run with the bat following six single-digit scores in nine outings.



Also, India dropped a total of eight catches over the last two ODIs seven in the second match itself in their 0-3 loss to the mighty Aussies.

"If we talk about the team's performance, we

are playing very good cricket in patches. Fielding and fitness are something that we have been talking about for a long time. We have been working on it too," Kaur told the media. Amol

Muzumdar, who was appointed the team's head coach in late October, informed in his first press conference before the T20I series against England that Munish Bali (fielding) and Troy Cooley (bowling) would be his support staff members.

"The best part is that now we have a regular support staff. In between, we had many coaches who had their own views on fielding and fitness," Kaur added.

"We have Munish sir now, he has to be given time. He is a very experienced coach and has worked with many players.

Nadal reaches Brisbane quarterfinals

Brisbane, Jan 04 (AP):

Rafael Nadal's comeback from a year-long injury layoff reached the Brisbane International quarterfinals after dominating Jason Kubler 6-1, 6-2 on Thursday.

The 22-time major winner is playing on a wild card after his ranking slipped into the 600s as he recovered from hip surgery, and he's desperate for match time ahead of the Australian Open this month. Nadal's first competitive match since January last year was a win on Tuesday against 2020 U.S. Open champion and former No. 3-ranked Dominic Thiem. "It means a lot to me," Nadal said, "and two victories after a



long time being outside of the professional tour is something that, yeah,

makes me feel good and happy." He was more convincing against Kubler, a

hometown favorite who is ranked 63rd after a career interrupted by multiple operations on his knees.

Nadal had 20 winners, including some ripping forehands, and eight unforced errors. He hit volleys and half-volleys and overheads. He scrambled to chase drop shots and covered the baseline without any visible signs of the injury.

The 37-year-old Spaniard lost only one point in his first three service games a double-fault on the second point of the match. But he was also able to dig himself out of a hole by winning five straight points when he faced triple breakpoint while serving for the first set.

Bumrah rewarded for bowling consistently in the channel: Tendulkar

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI):

Indian batting great Sachin Tendulkar credited Jasprit Bumrah's incisive bowling for the series-levelling seven-wicket win against South Africa in Cape Town on Thursday, saying the pacer was rewarded for consistently bowling in the channel.

Bumrah produced a hostile spell of 6/61 in 13.5 overs as the Proteas were restricted to 176 in the second innings, setting India a mere 79-run target.

India finished the job in 12 overs to record their first victory at Newlands in seven attempts. "Well bowled by Bumrah, who showed us exactly, how



bowling in the channel consistently is all that's required on such type of wickets," wrote Tendulkar on his social media platform X. Tendulkar also hailed South African opener Aiden Markram, who weathered hostile bowling on a difficult track to score a dogged 106 in the second essay. "Markram's approach was fantastic because sometimes attack is

the best form of defence on a pitch like this."

Former India opener Virender Sehwag, while being tongue-in-cheek in his remark about the opposition, said India's pace bowling attack was one of the most threatening in the world.

"Aap karo toh chatmatkar... Hum karein toh pitch bekaar (It's a miracle if you (opposition) do it... and if you achieve it, the pitch is bad). 107 overs -- Test match over. Also proves, anything there for the fast bowlers, we are more threatening with our quality. Bumrah and Siraj were spectacular and a good beginning to 2024," posted Sehwag.

SD Prajwal Dev added to India Davis Cup team for Pakistan tie

Bengaluru, Dec 04 (PTI):

Talented SD Prajwal Dev on Thursday was added to the Indian team as a replacement player for the upcoming Davis Cup tie in Pakistan.

Prajwal was not initially named in the squad for the World Group I Play-off tie on February 3 and 4 to be held in Islamabad, but got the call after reserve player Digvijay Singh pulled out of the tournament.

"I have been playing well in the ITF tournaments in India and abroad for the last two seasons. I view this opportunity as a reward for my consistency and I am quite elated to represent my country in

the Davis Cup," Prajwal told PTI. The 27-year-old Prajwal, who led Karnataka in the recent National Games held in Goa, said: "I am committed to giving my best on the court and contributing to a successful campaign for India." The Mysuru man is currently 609 in the ATP rankings.

The All India Tennis Federation (AITA) is waiting for the clearance from the Indian government to travel to Pakistan.

"We have not yet got the approval in writing but it is likely that we will get clearance soon," AITA Secretary General Anil Dhupar had told PTI earlier.

Newlands will always hold a special place: Bumrah

Cape Town, Jan 04 (PTI):

Having started his Test journey here at the Newlands six summers ago, India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is a touch emotional about the venue, and the icing on the cake was the 'Player-of-the-Series' award after the series-levelling record win over South Africa here on Thursday.

Bumrah, who made his Test debut here in 2018, grabbed his second five-wicket haul as India defeated South Africa by seven wickets in the shortest match in Test history, lasting 642 balls.



"This ground will always hold a special place in my heart," Bumrah, who was the leading

wicket-taker in the two-match series with 12 scalps, said during the post-match presentation.

"The journey started here in 2018, always have fond memories. Very happy it went well today."

"That journey started in 2018 -- our bowling unit was experienced and we wanted to make an impact. I didn't expect the game to go this fast."

Twenty-three wickets tumbled on day one as India were set a paltry target of 79 to level the two-match series.

India did so in 12 overs in the second session on day two, making it the shortest-ever Test.

ICC amends stumping, concussion substitute rules



Dubai, Jan 04 (PTI): The International Cricket Council (ICC) has effected a notable change in playing conditions, as per which the umpires henceforth will only assess the side-on replays for stumping without considering the caught-behind scenario during the Decision Review

System (DRS) referrals. The modification has come into effect on December 12, 2023 and accordingly if a team wants to refer to caught-behind in the process of a stumping, it will now have to exercise a DRS option for the caught-behind appeal separately.

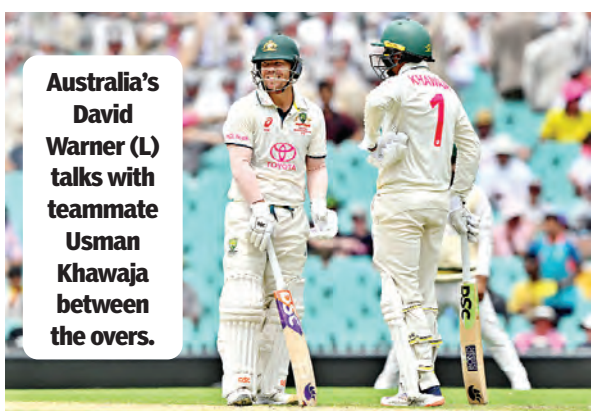
Poor light curtails 2nd day of 3rd Australia-Pakistan test

Sydney, Jan 04 (AP):

Australia opener David Warner was dismissed for 34 in his farewell cricket test against Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Thursday before rain and poor light ruined most of the rest of the second day.

Playing in his 112th and last test, Warner was caught at first slip by Babar Azam off Agha Salman's bowling before lunch.

Play was interrupted in the middle session with Australia at 116-2 in reply to Pakistan's 313. The lights were on at the SCG and the conditions were gloomy, but the decision to take players from the field



for bad light was met with boos from the crowd and criticism from former players.

Players stayed off for a further 40 minutes while 25,000 fans remained in attendance, before rain

was officially washed out.

Marnus Labuschagne will resume on 23 on Friday morning with Steve Smith on 6.

"It is so frustrating," Australia's ex-coach and

test opener Justin Langer said on Channel 7 television. "I have walked in all the shoes as a player and batsman. You want to be off and want perfect conditions, and then as coach you want what's best for your team."

"But when you look at the big picture, it is crazy these guys aren't playing test cricket here. You have a big crowd here, they have come here for David Warner's last game."

Warner will still likely have a chance to bat in the fourth innings of the match. He had threatened to go on with a big score on his home ground after surviving a chance earlier when dropped at slip by Saim Ayub on 20.

Aus Women will look to be ruthless against India: Wareham

Navi Mumbai, Jan 04 (PTI):

Being ruthless when on top has driven this Australia Women's team to remain dominant against India, a trait that the visitors will look to sustain in the three-match T20I series, said leg-spinner Georgia Wareham here on Thursday.

Having never lost a bilateral ODI series to India, Australia enjoy a 23-6 record in 31 T20Is against their opponents with one tied game and the remaining one producing no result.

The Aussies bounced back from a crushing defeat in the one-off Test to win the three-match ODI series 3-0.



"We speak about that a lot in our meetings (about) being ruthless when we're on top we like to keep doing that and not let it slip," Wareham told the reporters on the eve of the first T20I at the DY Patil Stadium.

'BJP wants me arrested to stop from campaigning for LS polls'

Kejriwal calls ED summons 'illegal'

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI)



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal addresses a press conference regarding summons issued to him by the ED in the excise policy case, in New Delhi, Thursday.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday alleged the BJP-led Central government wanted to arrest him and prevent from campaigning for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, saying the ED summons issued to him was aimed at hurting his "biggest asset" honesty and defaming him.

Kejriwal, however, said that he would cooperate with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) provided he was issued legally valid summons. "My lawyers have told me that the ED

briefing. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener has so far skipped three summons by the Enforcement Directorate for questioning in connection with a money laundering case linked to the alleged liquor scam. Kejriwal said the liquor scam case that was being talked about for the last two years was "fake" and the probe agencies have so far failed to present any evidence of corruption. "My biggest asset is my honesty and the BJP wants to hurt my honesty with fake cases. I have always fought for the country, every breath of mine, every drop of my blood is dedicated to the country," Kejriwal asserted. The AAP national convener appealed people for their

support to him at his hour of crisis. "The country cannot move forward by putting honest leaders in jail and allowing corrupt people to join their party. What's going on? Whatever is going on is very dangerous. This is very bad for our democracy. It must be stopped," he said. Kejriwal said that he has written to the ED, saying their summons are "illegal" but has not got any response. "They haven't replied because they know that their summons are illegal. Should I follow illegal summons? If legally sound summons will be issued, I will follow them. My greatest wealth is my honesty. They want to break me by tarnishing my image," he said.

VARSITY CONVOCATION



Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha during the 8th convocation of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, in Jammu, Thursday.

'Situation in country not favourable for BJP'

Shirdi, Jan 04 (PTI)



Sharad Pawar

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founder Sharad Pawar on Thursday asserted the political situation in the country is not favourable for the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha polls and pooh-poohed the saffron outfit's claim of winning more than 400 seats, saying it is out of power in several states.

Addressing NCP workers at a party conclave in the temple town of Shirdi in western Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district, he said after assuming power at the Centre in 2014, the BJP announced several programmes and gave a host of assurances, but did not implement them and "cheated" people.

People have now started realising this, stated the former Union minister.

"The situation in the country is not favourable for the BJP," said Pawar, whose party is a constituent of the national-

level opposition INDIA alliance.

The Rajya Sabha member said BJP leaders have set a target of winning more than 400 Lok Sabha seats, out of the total 543, but the party is currently not in power in several states.

The BJP is out of power in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Delhi, Punjab, West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand, he pointed out. Taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the former Union agriculture minister said assurances were made that farmers' income will be

doubled by 2022 and those without 'pucca' (concrete) houses will get one in urban areas, but these promises remain unfulfilled.

Modi had assured that by 2024-25 India will become a USD 5 trillion economy, but it is not even 50 per cent of that, Pawar said, adding the PM just gives "guarantees".

"But the guarantee is not fulfilled. This has been observed many times," said the veteran politician.

Pawar maintained the younger generation is feeling uneasy because of unemployment and referred to the December 13 Parliament security breach involving a group of people.

"When our MPs sought to know what were their (those involved in security breach incident) demands and pressed for a statement from the prime minister and the home minister, opposition members were suspended," he stated.

YSR Telangana party leader Sharmila joins Congress

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI)



YS Sharmila, founder of YSR Telangana Party, joins Congress in the presence of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi, in New Delhi, Thursday.

Y S Sharmila, the daughter of former Andhra Pradesh chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy and founder of YSR Telangana Party, joined the Congress here on Thursday.

She also announced the merger of her YSR Telangana Congress with the Congress, and said she would fulfil any responsibility given to her.

Sharmila joined the Congress in the presence of party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and former party president Rahul Gandhi.

She later met Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi at her residence and paid her respects. Sonia Gandhi welcomed her in the party fold.

Lauding the Congress, she said it is the largest and "most secular" party in the country as it unwaveringly serves all communities and unites all sections of people.

Congress has built our nation's foundations. The Congress has unwaveringly served all communities, uniting all sections of the people of India," Sharmila said in the presence of top party leadership.

"I truly honour the Congress because it is the most secular party, the largest secular party of the country," she said.

She said Rahul Gandhi has won the confidence of the people with his Bharat Jodo Yatra and that also led to the party's victory in Karnataka.

Sharmila said she was happy that she was part of the Congress victory in Telangana. She had announced her support to the Congress during the recent assembly polls in Telangana to end the alleged corrupt and anti-people rule of the BRS led by K Chandrasekhar Rao.

"I also realised that is going to have a domino effect in Telangana and, therefore, I graciously withheld from contesting

in Telangana. Congress stood a chance of victory in Telangana and we did not want to break the anti-KCR vote. The Congress won in Telangana and I am most happy that we contributed a part to that victory," she said.

She said it was her father's dream to see Rahul Gandhi as prime minister and she would be happy to contribute to it.

"It was my father's dream to see Rahul Gandhi as prime minister of our country and I am very glad that I am going to be a part in making that happen. Whatever responsibility the Congress will lay on me, I promise to fulfil that responsibility with all loyalty, integrity and diligence," Sharmila said.

In a post on X, she later said she is delighted on merging the YSR Telangana Party with the Congress, the party her father belonged to, "the party that he lived in, that he served tirelessly, and breathed his last in".

Docs links between meal timings and cardiovascular disease risk

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI)

EAT ON TIME

Breakfast at 8 am and dinner at 8 pm! A tall order for those with busy work days but a mantra for staying off cardiovascular diseases, say doctors who cite a recent study to stress the importance of early, regular and well-spaced meals.

A study led by the Universit Sorbonne Paris Nord in France lays out the association between meal timings and the risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD), a finding of particular interest to India.

According to the Global Burden of Disease study in 2020, India has a cardiovascular death rate of 272 per one lakh population, much higher than that of global average of 235.

CVDs are a group of disorders of the heart and blood vessels and include coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, rheumatic heart disease and other conditions.

The French study, published in the journal Nature Communications, found that eating the first and last meals of the day early along with a longer period of night-time fast-

ing could reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases. It is the leading cause of mortality in the world with 18.6 million annual deaths in 2019, of which around 7.9 are attributable to diet.

The findings, which need to be replicated in other cohorts and through additional scientific studies with different designs, highlight a potential role for meal timing in preventing cardiovascular disease, according to the researchers.

While the study wasn't conducted specifically in India, Abhinav Gupta, consultant cardiologist at Regency Hospital in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, said its findings may have implications for the population given the increasing burden of cardiovascular diseases in the country.

"As a doctor, I would advise people in India to be mindful of their meal timings and adopt a balanced approach to nutrition," Gupta told PTI.

"While individual dietary needs may vary, it's important to emphasise

regular, well-spaced meals and avoid heavy meals close to bedtime.

"This advice aligns with established principles of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, which includes a well-balanced diet, regular physical activity, and other factors that contribute to cardiovascular well-being," he added.

Adhering to the wisdom of timely meals, especially in the evening, has now gained scientific validation for its role in preventing cardiovascular issues, said

Vijay Kumar, senior consultant interventional cardiologist at Delhi's Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals

The French study had noted that in addition to light, the daily cycle of food intake (meals, snacks, etc.) alternating with periods of fasting synchronises the circadian rhythms of the body's various organs, influencing cardiometabolic functions such as blood pressure regulation.

Circadian rhythm is our body's internal clock that orchestrates physiological functions throughout the day.

The study used data from 103,389 (over one lakh) participants, 79 per cent of whom were women, with an average age of 42.

The results show that having the first meal later in the day, such as when skipping breakfast, is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, with a 6 per cent increase in risk per hour delay.

For example, a person who eats for the first time at 9 am is 6 per cent more likely to develop cardiovascular disease than someone who eats at 8 am, the researchers said.

Eating late (after 9 pm) is associated with a 28 per cent increase in the risk of cerebrovascular disease such as stroke compared with eating before 8 p.m., particularly in women, they said.

The study also shows that a longer duration of night-time fasting — the time between the last meal of the day and the first meal of the following day — is associated with a reduced risk of cerebrovascular disease, supporting the idea of eating one's first and last

meals earlier in the day.

According to a 2020 report by the World Health Organisation, India accounts for one-fifth of the total 17.7 million deaths worldwide due to cardiovascular diseases, especially in the younger population.

"The latest study underscores the critical impact of diet on the development and progression of these diseases. Encouraging individuals to consume their initial and concluding meals earlier, thereby incorporating an extended period of night time fasting, emerges as a strategic approach to mitigate cardiovascular risks," Kumar told PTI.

"This practice not only promotes heart health but has also shown promise in averting heart attacks," he added.

SC rejects Khera's plea, to face trial for Modi quip

New Delhi, Jan 04 (PTI)

REMARKS ON PM

In fresh trouble for Congress leader Pawan Khera, the Supreme Court on Thursday dismissed his petition challenging the Allahabad High Court order refusing to quash criminal proceedings against him for making objectionable remarks targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paving the way for his trial.

At a press conference in Mumbai in February 2023, Khera had called the prime minister "Narendra Gautam Das Modi", a comment that did not go down well with BJP leaders and supporters, and was seen as a reference to industrialist Gautam Adani.

Prime Minister Modi writes his full name as Narendra Damodar Das Modi, with Damodar Das being his father's name. In several Indian states, people use their father's name as middle name, and Khera tinkering with it drew sharp criticism and protests. A bench of Justices B R Gavi and Sandeep Mehta said it was not inclined to interfere with the high court order.

"You go on seeking apologies and apologies. Sorry, we are not inclined," the bench told senior lawyer Salman Khurshid, who appeared for Khera. During the brief hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for

Uttar Pradesh, told the court that a reply to Khera's petition has been submitted on the basis of the charge sheet filed in the case. Salman Khurshid requested the apex court to grant some time to file a rejoinder which was declined. The bench, while dismissing the plea, remarked, "Wishing away an offence, is that possible?"

Khera had moved the top court against the August 17, 2023 order of the high court, which had dismissed his plea saying the evidence collected by the investigating officer of the case cannot be evaluated in the petition filed under Section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) for quashing the case.

'New plant species discovered in Maha's Pench Tiger Reserve'

Nagpur, Jan 04 (PTI)

A new plant species of Polygonum genus has been discovered at Gol Pahadi Island of the Pench Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra during a survey, a forest official claimed.

A floral survey was carried out over one year in

Pench during which 863 plant species belonging to 554 genera and 117 families were reported, PTR's deputy director Dr Prabh Nath Shukla said.

"A new plant species named Polygonum Chaturbhujanum has been discovered at Gol Pahadi island of PTR. It is a herb," said Dr K

Chandramohan, one of the surveyors.

Six plant species endemic to India have also been found in Pench. They are Aegineta indica, Boerhavia crispa, Habenaria gibsonii var foetida, Iphigenia pallida, Petalidium barlerioides and Barleria gibsonii, Shukla said in a release.

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